

Construing Transitology

A Contribution to the Critique of the Political Economy of Post-Socialist Transition

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| Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>The thesis construes the cultural field of transitology from the point of view its historical development and characteristics. Transitology specifically and transition studies generally mushroomed in the wake of the fall of the Soviet Union. Transitology is a specific term for a field of transition studies to which particular attributes are controversially connected. These attributes include nomotheticity, ahistoricity, positivism and determinism. Of interest is the fact, that transitology represents a field of academia concerned with guiding policy recommendations in a process that aimed to democratize and market liberalize post-socialist countries in Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union. This instigated a close connection between the social scientific debates and actual policy.</p> <p>The thesis advances in a twofold manner to investigate the effects of the connections and historical factors behind the nature and applicability of transitology. First, it constructs a historical narrative of the developments of social sciences, transition studies, socialist social sciences and post-socialist space. Through different conjunctures each of these levels brought about its own meaning to the manner in which transitology consolidated its existence. Secondly, the thesis observes the form and nature of the relation of transitological research to its own premises and to its subject matter. A historical and radical perspective of social scientific thought is applied to detect the form of the relations. These perspectives are mainly world-systems analysis and the political economy of Stephen Gill. The relations under observation are then set into a wider context of social sciences and cultural competition with the help of Pierre Bourdieu's sociological thought. Academic labour is perceived analogously to a Marxist perspective of labour as a social process.</p> <p>The thesis concludes transitology to have attained specific character for a variety of reasons. In general these reasons are seen to stem from an interaction of the state of social scientific thought in the late 80s and early 90 and the historical state of the post-socialist space. Observing the effects and developments occurring from this interplay, the thesis claims transitological thought to have consolidated itself as a constituting cleavage of the post-socialist cultural and political space rather than dissolved into a myriad of approaches.</p> <p>In such a situation, in which a dislodgment between the temporal and spatial dimensions of the cultural field of research and academia and the object of its study has occurred, it becomes vehemently important to focus on the relation and type of research conducted and its direct and indirect implications to its subject matter.</p> | | | |
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1. Introduction

This thesis addresses the research questions, form, intent and direction of studies of transition and more specifically transitology. Therefore it does not analyze or describe a specific idiographic event or attempt to unfold the outcomes of a concrete historical process, but rather concerns itself with a young field of academics consolidating its existence. This field, transitology, is establishing itself amidst philosophical cleavages of social sciences, structural and historical processes and burdens of scientific culture, the shifts in political and social space experienced heavily in the newborn post-socialist space and lastly it is establishing itself amidst demanding connections to and needs of policy makers and the tumultuous reality of countries in transition.

The subtitle of this thesis refers to Marx' 1859 published *Kritik*. It does so in a few regards. Firstly there is a shared focus on the historical perspective, which refuses purely formalized and quantified descriptions of market and political relations. Secondly it utilizes various social theorists from Immanuel Wallerstein to Pierre Bourdieu and Stephen Gill who are all related more or less directly to traditions of Marxist thought. Thirdly, this paper assumes the dialectics of academic culture and social thought to progress through the instruments which the academic labourer utilizes between himself and the subject of his labour. Through these instruments academic work becomes a shared and commensurable *social* process. Thus knowledge is produced in co-operation and with mutual exchange creating a division of labor within the academic field, the distinctions. This division deepens and produces the elaborate concepts and conducts that further foster academic entrenchments; Labour in the academic cultural field is perceived analogously to Marx' description of labour and its division in society.¹ Therefore for me a cultural field represents a network of mutually responding habitus formed through the social process of cultural production. The profession under observation in this thesis is more specifically the academic cultural field of social sciences.

In 2001 political scientist Robert Gilpin wrote that, no one knows exactly what factors led to the overthrow of communism and even less is known of new directions². In

¹ Marx, Karl. *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Translated from the German by S.W. Ryazanskaya, edited by Maurice Dobb. Lawrence & Wishart. London 1971, introduction.

² Gilpin Robert: *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order*. Princeton University Press, Princeton New Jersey 2001, 333.

actuality libraries are filled with thousands of varying answers. Therefore it is no wonder that such a concept as transition from communism was given room and necessity to entrench itself in a distinct manner. I claim in this thesis that the contestation of truth in the matter of transition is the most visible evidence of this entrenchment.

But why examine a conceptualization when concepts by definition are under change and varying? Besides the habitual explanation of the task of definition indeed being the task of science, my own interest with transition lies in its complex origins and connections to social sciences and dependencies of social realities. And most importantly my interest with transition studies lies in the historical lines of thought which are not just behind all these aspects but also permeating them. Transition studies' and transitology's innate nature is commonly perceived normative and positivist³, but this is only half of the story and a mere description. I am interested to know why and how this came to be. For by its nature transition as a concept is one to be followed and or to be practiced. It is born out of the need to know "what is to be done"⁴ in analogous manner to social sciences in post-Enlightenment Europe, in analogous manner of the 19th century need for social engineering. Therefore it stands out as a prime example of the need, articulated by Pierre Bourdieu, to 'objectivate the subject of the objectivation'⁵ in order to avoid relativizations between perspectives. A familiar example of a similar event might clarify what I imply: The *Methodenstreit (der Nationalökonomie)*, which was born out of political need of the emerging nation-state for a science of fiscal policy, but - once the vertical and horizontal boundaries of the emerging field were shaping - this led to an epistemological attestation in order to establish legitimization for the functional relation of the field of science to actual policy.

My account in this thesis of the dialectical roots of transitology reflects upon the formation of this institutionalization during the 20th century, from Nikolai Chernyshevsky's empowerment of the individual himself searching for and evaluating the relations between the possibilities of his life to Lenin's insistence on concerted aims and action of the society as a whole and to Jeffrey Sachs's discreditation of the whole

³Roland, Gerard: The Political Economy of Transition. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 16, No. 1, January 2002, 4.

⁴ I am referring here to the works of Chernyshevsky, Lenin and Sachs, all of which will be elaborated upon.

⁵Bourdieu, Pierre: *Science of Science and Reflexivity*. Polity Press, Cambridge 2004, 85-88.

contestation for the horizon of the possible in favor of one system, one type of rationalization.

The paper will layer by layer historically and theoretically encroach upon the conjuncture of thought, action and system that affects decisively the consolidation of transitology. In order to do just to such non-observable relations as that between social scientific thought and social reality we are to take a step backward in history for each two theoretical step towards our objective.

Perhaps historical social science must start with the abstract and move in the direction of the concrete, ending with a coherent interpretation of the processes of particular historical systems that accounts plausibly for how they followed a particular concrete historical path. The determinate is not the simple but the complex, indeed hyper-complex. And of course no concrete situation is more complex than the long moments of transition when the simpler constraints collapse.⁶

1.1 Reforms, Economic and Ideological

Reform is the manifestation of the need to know “what is to be done”. Glancing at reform let us first acquaint ourselves with one account from the past. In his introductory outlook on the economic and financial reforms conducted in the socialist states of Eastern Europe a soviet economist - one B.G Boldyrjow - writes that the People’s Democracies have followed radical economic, societal and political transformations and entered a period of transition. Boldyrjow wrote the original Russian language version of his book in 1951. It was two years later translated to German for the East German public under the title *Die Finanzen der europäischen Länder der Volksdemokratie*. Observing the post-World War II transition in Eastern Europe Boldyrjow writes that in this transformation finance politics play an important role. He then warns of such

⁶Wallerstein, Immanuel: *Unthinking Social Science: The Limits of Nineteenth-Century Paradigms*. Polity Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1991, 255-256. In this context Wallerstein refers to transition as any social transition.

international actors as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as mere affiliates of Wall Street's interests.⁷

Boldyrjow reflects upon the financial and currency reforms implemented after the last war as cautionary examples. According to him those reforms in effect led to a drop in the quality of life, raised the tax burden, raised the prices of mass produce and sank real wages. The final result was a chronically disrupted condition of the finance system. The word 'chronically' appears for Boldyrjow to imply fundamental structural errors in economic policy.

The financial restructurings of the time, according to Boldyrjow, were "diametrically opposed" to the previously implemented post-World War I reforms. The reforms aimed to consolidate and develop the economies, raise the material prosperity of the people, end inflation and stabilize the currencies. The reforms were implemented "abnormally rapidly". The actions have abolished household deficits and secured the growth of currency reserves and increased goods turnover as the empirical data presented by the author reveals. The new policies thus would appear to have remedied actions led by a previous regime with a fundamentally flawed understanding of economics.⁸

In regards the importance of successful fiscal policy in the implementation of economic reforms Boldyrjow then quotes none other than Lenin:

*One must not forget that all radical reforms of our times have led to failures, when we have not been successful with finance politics.*⁹

In the manners described above, the reforms adopted led according to Boldyrjow to a transition from capitalism to socialism and to the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship, Boldyrjow writes.¹⁰

The post-World War I economic reforms which B.G. Boldyrjow compared the soviet led ones after the Second World War and mentioned as 'diametrically opposed' were mainly American led. Of interest here is that goal-oriented economic reforms are not unprecedented, on the contrary, but the means and form of reforms are bound in various ways, historically, normatively and instrumentally. As you may have noticed

⁷B.G. Boldyrjow 1953. introduction and chapter 1 .Terms were translated from the German by the author. The German word used for transition in the copy is *Übergang*.

⁸ Boldyrjow 1953. introduction and chapter 1.

⁹Boldyrjow 1953, 7. Translation from the Russian. Quotation translated from the German by the author.

¹⁰ Boldyrjow 1953. introduction and chapter 1.

Boldyrjow's argumentation does not conceptually differ much from what we might have heard from modern economists in the 90s, besides that they would be quoting Jeffrey Sachs instead of Lenin.

An odd 40 years later in 1989-91 the historically short lived political experiment of Bolshevism came to an abrupt, sudden and swift end. Yet, the decades of state socialism exerted huge impact on continuities on multiple levels from social habitus to philosophy of social sciences. At the same time the Yang was left without the Ying as the dialectical structures of bipolar international politics and societal theory crumbled. And as the French sociologist and theorist of cultural competition and distinction Pierre Bourdieu describes, the strongest orthodoxies come usually not in one but two varieties.

This revolution was one from above¹¹. It was a refolution, as termed by Timothy Garton Ash, a sequence of reforms from above in reply to the pressure from below. Such key figures as Eduard Shevardnadze and Aleksandr Yakovlev opted out of one ideology and continued politics in reformist movements¹². And as a refolution, one abandoning ideology, the vacuum of power following the turn of events was not one of a political but of an ideological sort. It was one quickly seized¹³ by an eclipsing tradition of western thought as the post-modern challenge made space for neo-modernisation theories to establish a foothold in the newly deserted cultural field of academics in post-socialist space¹⁴.

This ideological dislodgment following the 1989-91 revolutions can also be interpreted from the relative peacefulness of the events themselves **in relation** to the heavily normative debate on the direction and nature of the reforms to be undertaken, which began already during the very same years. In 1990 Ralf Dahrendorf attacked the Third Way argument¹⁵ and already in 1990, with Yeltsin and Gorbachev still battling it out, the Economist published the famed article by Jeffrey Sachs titled *What Is to Be Done?* Furthermore, following the Frenchman Alain Touraine's sociology of social

¹¹Dahrendorf, Ralf: *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe*. Chatto & Windus, London 1990, 56.

¹²Dunlop, John: *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire*. Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1993, 22-23.

¹³Gowan, Peter: *Neo-Liberal Theory and Practice for Eastern Europe*, New Left Review, Vol. A, 1995, 3-60.

¹⁴Wagner, Peter: *A history and theory of social sciences*. Sage Publications, London 2001a, 161-166.

¹⁵The Third Way argument in this context spoke for the preservation of certain socialist policies together with the implementation of selected capitalist and democratic policies.

movements¹⁶, had there existed a shared goal among the opposition movements of 1989-91 other than the simple desire for reforms or willingness to overthrow the communists, divisions and political persecution on a cadre level would have likely followed. In such a case groupings would have followed a shared symbolic utopia, one which would have been seen as promising benefits for them in relation to the synthetic others, pinning societal classes against each other. Such divisions of the political cadres did not occur. No antisystemic movement stemmed from challenging the delegitimized communists as their defining systemic ‘other’, rather movements built upon parallel lines of legitimization were experienced. These movements challenged communist rule in a wider or narrower context than that of the communist system of legitimization. The upholding and legitimizing structures of the communist system were buried rather than harnessed by an antisystemic movement. The main events thus centered on elite competition as proposed by transition studies¹⁷ such as the August putsch and several less dramatic renegotiations of state power or wider social movements as was witnessed in the Baltic states for example. As put by John Dunlop among others, the legitimizing ideology was buried¹⁸.

Why is it important that this revolution buried an ideology and not the bodies of the cadres? It is important for what followed; an already fading school of thought seized its opportunity and moved in to the abandoned grazing grounds. As a naïve analogy would serve the manner in which the common cold prospered among the non-immune Native Americans. A demand for slogans and ideas was apparent in the emerging post-socialist cultural field. For the world divided by the October Revolution, in which the conflict of politics was that of revolution and counter-revolution, had ceased to have much relation to reality already before 1989 ended the ideological contestation¹⁹. And thus ideas and reality were dislodged from each other dramatically, allotting an easy “hostile takeover”.

Awestruck and dazzled by the swift fall of its constituting other the western social sciences nevertheless had to accept that not time nor society seized but rather took form

¹⁶ Touraine, Alan : *The Voice & the Eye, An analysis of social movements*. Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, Cambridge 1981.

¹⁷ Gans-Morse, Jordan: *Searching for Transitologists: Contemporary Theories of Post-Communist Transitions and the Myth of a Dominant Paradigm*. Post-Soviet Affairs, 2004, 20, 4, 320-349.

¹⁸ Dunlop 1993

¹⁹ Hobsbawm, E.J.: *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780. Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge 1992, 177-192.

in a completely new social and political space underlined by a new dynamics of a socialist legacy and capitalist ambitions. And therefore, as there were now no more barbarians in the north, no more a by default opposing ideology, the remaining hegemony had to construct its own Hadrian's Wall for its cadres, the cornerstone of which would be named the transition. A dominant ideology was replaced by another²⁰, by one torn by inner conflicts²¹. In this manner many of the problems facing the post-socialist states resembled both the semi-peripheral problems faced by them in procommunist times²² as well as the post-World-War II problems described by B.G. Boldyrjow, both in policy theorizing and in reality.

The destructiveness of this development was emphasized by the fact that also the meritocratic middle class²³ in post-socialist countries was previously upheld by the ideology. Following for example Samuel Huntington, the capacity to stable rule rests on systems of accountability²⁴. If middle class status loses its accountability the economic repercussions are felt throughout the society and even more emphasized when we look at how the diffusion of the post-socialist countries to the world-economy set them into its semi-periphery²⁵. Destructive in itself, this situation was worsened by the collapse of the regional trading system²⁶ at a time of the so called second regionalism²⁷, which meant the rise of strengthened regional control of markets and borders within the neighboring European Union. Thus, this diffusion took place in situation of stronger regional competition allowing for fewer geopolitical pressure vents that would have counteracted the new constraints imposed by the exposure to a liberal market system.

²⁰Hann, C.M. ed.: *Postsocialism. Ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia*. Routledge, London 2002, preface.

²¹Wallerstein 1991.

²²Derluguian Georgi: *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer in The Caucasus*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2005, 79.

²³In many regards it can be argued that there was no middle class in real socialism. Yet I claim that clear upward mobility was experienced at least following its establishment and many positions consolidated in this process were entrenched after the Kruchev period, therefore strictly when referring to social mobility and meritocracy in relation the western or core countries I wish to evoke the concept.

²⁴Haggard, Stephan – Kaufman, Robert: *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*. Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1995, 370.

²⁵Boatca, Manuela. Semiperipheries in the World-System: Reflecting Eastern European and Latin American Experiences. *Journal of World-Systems Research*, XII, 2006 and Fischer, Stanley: *IMF Essays from a Time of Crisis. The International Financial System, Stabilization, and Development*. The MIT Press. Cambridge Massachusetts 2004, 429.

²⁶Haggard - Kaufman 1995, 372.

²⁷Gilpin 2001, 341.

With this I mean, that as will be argued in this thesis, the defining cleavages for cultural and political competition became more so the discrepancies between systems of thought and historical realities rather than existing cleavages of the shared post-socialist space.

Therefore it is unsurprising that some have likened the end of communism to the end of a civil war between two children of the European Enlightenment²⁸. And returning to the establishment of this civil war it is descriptive that it was an educated yet disillusioned Frenchman on the cold wintry streets of Kazan who should shout out these words in Gorky's 1923 novel *My Universities*:

*Progress—people made it up, to fool themselves!*²⁹

Just as Marx scorned the likes of Proudhon and Owens³⁰, Gorky has the disillusioned child of enlightenment renounce the naïve belief in progress for the sake of concerted struggle to control the possible horizons of it. Here I stumble upon the dialectical analogy between the rise and fall of communism, which farther ahead I will explore further in relation to the creation of transitology, the science of post-socialist transition.

1.2 Construct

The actual construct of my thesis is as follows. First observations of transition studies will be conducted to introduce the field and my perspective of it. Some argumentative points will already be included to draw connections to the theoretical material and to sort out the material in a relevant manner. These points will fall into context with the subsequent chapters. The focus is set on politics and economy with a selection of varying perspectives representing authors of different fields, origins and perspectives. I will then embark on presenting my analytical tools with the help of a specific example from transition literature, what I call the Stiglitz debate, thus also taking first steps at constructing the analysis. This will be followed in chapter 4 with a historical look at the events leading to the birth of a new field of science, transitology, and lastly its relation to the post-soviet social space. Chapter 5 then tackles the actual character of the cultural

²⁸ Ackerman Bruce: *The Future of Liberal Revolution* in Tismaneanu, Vladimir ed.: *Revolutions of 1989. Rewriting Histories*. Routledge, London and New York 1999, 210.

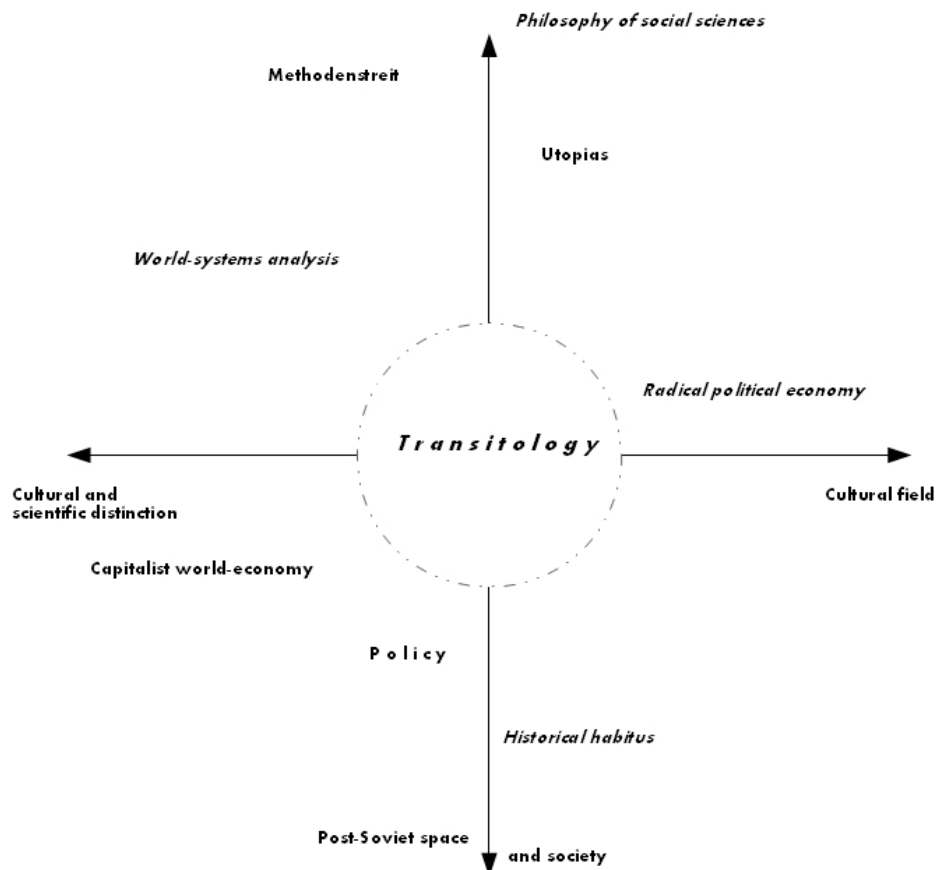
²⁹ Gorky, Maxim.: *My Universities*. Foreign Languages Publishing, Moscow. 1952. Translated from the Russian by Helen Altschuler. First published in 1923.

³⁰ Dahrendorf 1990, 41.

field and its roots. Having in this way constructed my view of transitology, I assert my analysis upon it in chapter 6.

I cover the relation of transitology to policy and social space, its relation as a field of science to my analytical tools and its relation to the philosophy of social science. In following this construct please refer to figure 1 as simple illustrative help. We may visualize the field of transitology to move in time. Its boundaries are ‘horizontally’ formed and changed in relation to other cultural fields and indigenous and exogenous cultural and scientific distinction. ‘Vertically’ it is constituted by action stemming from transitology, such as policies and reactions to them, and through historical epistemological debates of social scientific inquiry.

Figure 1.



Having thus construed an image or mould of transitology as a cultural field I lastly move on to synthesis and conclusions of how it came to be. In line with a historical perspective I will argue that the character of transitology was not the result of a contingent event or teleological or evolutionary development, but a structural cleavage in itself, one augmented by developments of different systems of thought manifesting themselves differently on various levels of societal action and thought.

The incorporation of the debate on a concept to the concept itself becomes evident in this process. For a conceptualization of anything is bound to time and to usage, since a concept itself, in its historical meaning, is opposed to anything universal. It is a framework for distinguishing and discriminating between actions of similar sort³¹. A concept is bound jointly and individually by its users and usage. It is an instrument.

In construing transitology the construct of the research gains additional importance. I intend to carve out a meaning for transitology as a historically bound phenomenon, a product as well as a conceptualizer of its time. My analytical tools are themselves positioned in a manner or another within the scientific field(s) and the synthesis of these positions will define the value and effect of my arguments. Thus emphasis should lay on their interplay. I formulate a division of labor between the theoretical approaches applied, with the hope that this division will produce extra value as system of analysis.

By the means of reflections and reference to world-systems analysis and radical political economy I hope to discern some effective components of the historical and contested transition phenomenon with a focus on the aforementioned distinctions of the concept. In this manner these approaches will function as social scientific tuning forks rather than actual determinants of deductions. Tuned on the frequency of my propositions they may detect points of interest, but as they are approaches to social theory themselves I cannot apply them directly when observing social theory. My own epistemological perspective of social sciences is that “since human beings, their culture, and their social institutions are nowhere the same and are constantly changing, they can only be understood through history and historical knowledge”³².

³¹Inglis, Fred: *Culture*. Polity Press, Cambridge and Malden 2004.

³²Best, Steven: *The Politics of Historical Vision: Marx, Foucault, Habermas*. The Guilford Press, New York 1995, preface XIV.

I would like to remind, following historian, sociologist and world-systems analyst Georgi Derluguian³³ and many others, that in social science we may only discuss or notice phenomena and only to the extent that our conceptualizations and theoretizations allow us. Thus, many a phenomenon or connection will be excluded. Therefore, when evaluating an approach taken on transition, for example by economics, I am necessarily contesting its epistemological premises. And in that regard this thesis sides with historical, structural and critical social science, which it also presents as the opposing side of the dialectics within social sciences in a larger sense, of the dialectics that affected the contingent independent variables creating the dependent form of transitology. Precisely for this reason I would like to stress the analytical and instrumental value of my own theoretizations or simply problematizations, as they shed light on the nature of the perspectives under comparison from their specific viewpoint. In this I recognize that any theorem necessarily also affects in return both my perspective and consequent choices, causing some inevitable path-dependencies for the research, which should indeed and importantly be **read into** the research itself to grasp the relation between these perspectives and their object of study.

On the same note one could easily be advised to center a study of the academics of transition around empirical data sets as a primary source material, even if they too were and are gathered from the point of view of particular epistemological dispositions and often but reinforce those dispositions. I speak here of statistical data and policy reports by organizations connected to policy formulations. In the case of transition such organizations have been for example the IMF, World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Freedom House. An approach focusing on such source material becomes common logic in a situation in which the real choice is actually between different normative approaches to policy, as was kindly reminded to me to be the condition in transition³⁴. But I assert that the relation between an analysis and the policy it suggests is in actuality therefore often disregarded on grounds of necessity, in a similar fashion as is often done in the act of objectivating the initial target, space and time of a study. The relations of a study or a field of science to its concrete and abstract surroundings can be as determining as the results and inner logic of the study itself. The existence or life of a study or a field of science within socially bound time and space is

³³Derluguian 2005.

³⁴Researcher Pekka Sutela to Juho Korhonen. Email exchange 10th of April 2011.

often disregarded when focus is laid on the spatial and temporal characters of the object of study.

On one hand, when drifting too far into epistemology, any scholar's inability to avoid eclecticism is to be set under close scrutiny, simply due to unavoidable humane shortcomings. On the other hand, the choice of an analysis for social conditions is necessarily an act of eclecticism in itself, an act from which also the analysis under observation in this thesis stems from, the formation of transitology was a choice of an analysis for social conditions. And importantly, it is as such also an act towards social conditions in a similar fashion as the means and form of social reform always are, whereas the goals not necessarily are.

Following the epistemology of my perspective the analytical position of the research at hand is stemming from world-systems analysis. In regards the 1989 upheavals it was outlined by Immanuel Wallerstein and Giovanni Arrighi in the article *1989: The continuation of 68* and eloquently and exemplary further described by Derlugian in *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer in the Caucasus*. In short it assumes no plausible dissections between time and space, thus no dissections between the social, political and economical spheres either. Therefore, it concerns itself with recognizable structural fault lines affecting historical processes. 1968 was a 'world revolution' of antisystemic forces against the Old Left and the capitalist world-system, a cleavage between two layers of history; a reorganization of the industrial and technological and the social and institutional. 1968 therefore represents symbolically a longer term process. Reactions of prosystemic forces to this cleavage varied. In Brezhnev's USSR repression and a 'sweeping under the carpet of ideological self-assurance' were the methods employed to counter the contradictions of 1968. Thus the cleavage between the productive and institutional apparatuses was not mended; the problemacy of 1968 was not incorporated into the systemic forces to a similar degree as happened in Western Europe or China through a quantification of the antisystemic demands into the political *topos*.³⁵ How this process came to be and then manifested itself is discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

No doubt other fault lines **to** the past can be drawn as well. Though In transition studies fault lines **from** the past are rarely drawn and even though no discipline goes as far as to deny the historicity of transition dynamics and processes and their inner contradictions,

³⁵ Arrighi, Giovanni – Hopkins, Terence – Wallerstein, Immanuel: *1989: The Continuation of 1968*. in George Katsiaficas ed.: *After the Fall*. Routledge, New York 2001.

they are more often than not swept aside in conjunction with emphasizing a clean sheet strategy. This is exemplified in the early rejection of the Third Way Model, which would have built upon socialist legacy rather than attempt a transformation³⁶. As this rejection comes to reflect a major conjuncture in this thesis I find it worthy to quote Dahrendorf lengthy on the topic here:

*It [Third Way] has somewhat awkward names, all of which aim at describing a halfway house between the realities of what used to be the West and what used to be the East. Some speak of a 'middle way', some of a 'third way', and all believe it would be wrong to shed the achievements of forty years of socialism and swallow capitalism lock, stock and barrel... This sounds good, even plausible, yet it is the wrong way to approach the tasks which lie ahead both in theory and in practice.*³⁷

Defined by Robert Gilpin as the interaction of markets, states, multinational corporations and international organizations³⁸ global political economy is a superordinate concept of the approaches both of Immanuel Wallerstein and of Stephen Gill. Gill's analysis of political economy is the second position to which reflections from transitology are drawn in my historical conceptualization. Both, in their separate regards, insist upon no division of the unit of analysis, the global social order. In order to dissect various perspectives of transition such a scale of analysis is required. Also historical developments within social sciences advocate this type of an approach. Ever since the end of the 80s the dichotomy of the underdeveloped versus the developed has been losing ground to the rise of the market versus state problematization³⁹. This development manifests itself in forms of policy legitimization, incentives for action and in a shift of normativeness from ends to means. What I perceive this shift to be is further elaborated in chapter 5. The question of policy legitimization is raised in my analysis in chapter 6 as the focal point of the effects of transitology on the political field of the post-socialist space, or more precisely the political *topos*, which refers to the historical habitus of the political actors.

³⁶See for example Dahrendorf 1990, Chapter "Mostly about the Strange Death of Socialism and the Mirage of a 'Third Way'." Or Sachs, Jeffrey: *What Is to Be Done?*The Economist, 12.1.1990.

³⁷Dahrendorf 1990, 53. Brackets by the author.

³⁸Gilpin 2001.

³⁹Gilpin 2001, 4.

Therefore the political economy of transition is historically bound, a view often rejected by economists. As when looking at other transition societies besides the post-communist countries, the relative strength of power holders favored by the old economic models also represents a force for continuity⁴⁰, but as discussed above, in the case of post-socialist transitions the old macroeconomic models were bound to the almost categorically rejected ideology.

1.3 Backdrop

Let us briefly consider the situation in which we find ourselves examining transitology. Transition studies have historical roots and existed already before the fall of the Soviet Union. Abraham Lowenthal, in his foreword to the 1986 groundbreaking four volume *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* by Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead, suggest that the importance of the study is in "Its analytic and normative focus on the prospects of building democratic or polyarchic politics... useful not only to scholars and observers but to political actors alike."⁴¹ I assert that in the wake of the events unfolding in 1989 transitology then consolidated its specific character.

*Normative and prescriptive ideas shadow almost all discussions of states and economic transition.*⁴²

The need for policy legitimization and measurability stimulated the growth of transitology, it began to take shape as a field of its own, borrowing mainly from political science and economics. Such values as democracy, liberalization and privatization were given quantitative standards through the statistics of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Freedom House. The former began to publish its Transition Report in 1994 and the latter its Nations in Transit publication in 1995. Different hypothesis on building democracy could thus be tested and contested, undermined, critisized and built upon. Specific areas of transition were recognized and theories of them simplified and again complexified. Individual choice or structural

⁴⁰Haggard– Kaufman 1995, 368.

⁴¹ O'Donnell, Guillermo – Schmitter, Philippe – Whitehead, Laurence. *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Latin America*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London 1986, ix.

⁴²Tilly Charles. *Democracy, Social Change, and Economies in Transition* In Nelson - Tilly – Walker ed.: *Transforming Post-Communist Political Economies*. National Academy Press, Washington 2001, 403.

dependency were stressed or synthesized. The transitional political space was created and defined to meet the needs of theories applied. It was created to be unique, ever-flowing, interdependent and novel. Even though structural legacies may restrict or direct possible conflicts arising from the transitional space, the space itself is artificially treated as isolated by the 1989/91 divide from the rest of the social sciences and history.

How did this come to be? A brief narrative of the basis of the initial conditions my research assumes can clarify how transitology grew out of social sciences themselves. I later on offer as one explanatory factor for that process the epistemological down curve of utopian thought within social sciences at the time.

In constructing a narrative I attempt to tell the story of how the scientific fields of political science and economics, fostered in Europe and proliferated in North America moved in and occupied the turbulent Eurasian cultural field. I will first touch upon the issue now and elaborate it in conjunction with each respective perspective of the cultural field of transitology.

Political science and economics within the social sciences have traditionally advanced themselves to depict and analyze minute shifts and layered dynamics of the industrialized, modernized core states and their - in a relative sense no doubt - structurally very static political systems. Within these political and economic systems of the core states the structures of the political arena have been, for the life span of political science and economics as social sciences know them now, horizontally consolidated and established not only in respective states, but also within the world-economy. Thus, many an analysis has found its constants self-explanatory and have concentrated on specific variables and often so within single equations. I argue in line with Steven Best that these types of explanatory models distort any description of societal dynamics⁴³.

As we are able to read from even the relatively short yet tumultuous history of the post-socialist Eurasian space, the aforementioned consolidation of the economic and political systems is not the prevalent condition in its social and political space. Therefore I wish to determine in which form the detailed approach of western political science and economics has come to connect to that social and political space. What is the form and character of their relation and which dynamics sustain it?

⁴³ Best 1995, XIV.

Reflections to existing divisions and niches within the social sciences, to approaches which by default assume a more structural and constant based – in opposition to variant – research scheme, shall be drawn. Mainly that is to radical political economy, which assumes the flip-side of the composed condition in core politics to naturally be a discursive and radically more strongly stratified and cleaved structure of social dynamics. Secondly reflections will be drawn to world-systems approach which has its origins in criticism of the 20th century modernist and developmentalist social science, wishing to disclaim the subject matter of the *Methodenstreit* in favor of **not** delineating the explanandum from the explanans through out-of-necessity interdependent kantian categories, such as space, time and causality, but rather attempting to reach synthesis. Therefore we might in this manner arrive at a definition and analysis of the horizontal dynamics of transitology within the cultural fields of sciences and at a narrative style description of the vertical connections and linkages of the cultural field to existing politics and on the other hand to the social sciences and the dynamics, cleavages and entrenchments within them.

Thus, partially I attempt to fulfill Bourdieu's ideal of reflexivity of science and in - only epistemological – opposition and partly through the critical matter of the world-systems analysis, to Hempel and Oppenheim's deductive-nomological model⁴⁴ and actually put forward the ‘what’ question towards the ‘why’ question itself in the context of this particular field and process within the social sciences and arrive at a both historical and hermeneutic conclusion.

Therefore any assumptions of the horizontal dynamics of transitology rely and rest on a bourdieunian description of cultural fields examined through reflections on the aforementioned approaches, divergent from transitology within the social sciences themselves. Whereas the processes that gave form, consolidated and connected transitology to its subject matter on the other hand and social sciences philosophy on the other, are described historically and in narrative with two main focuses. These focuses are the philosophy of social utopias and the dynamic of nomothetic versus idiographic, modernism versus dependency, the ever occurring manifestations of the *Methodenstreit*. From these systemic structures and their histories I will pinpoint the conjuncture that is transitology.

⁴⁴Hempel, Carl - Oppenheim, Paul: *Studies in the Logic of Explanation*. Philosophy of Science. Vol. 15 No. 2, 1948.

Why look at such a normative scientific field from such a theoretical and abstract point of view? Because there is a linkage:

*Of course each of these normative-prescriptive positions rests on non-normative theories concerning the likely causes and consequences of state action in its various guises. But each causal account also clings to a set of preferences.*⁴⁵

Dismaying this linkage may lead to tautologies, path-dependencies and reifications.

1.4 A System

The idea of a system bears indirect weight in my analysis and therefore calls for closer inspection. In constructing my analytical framework with which I approach transitology I am by necessity presenting a system of thought. The importance of a system is further emphasized when diving deeper into the roots of thought behind the initial conditions around the consolidation of transitology. Social sciences as well as the historical ideological system(s) that saw their decline are heavily conditioned by forms of systemic thought, as goes the argument of Ralf Dahrendorf⁴⁶.

The definition of a system becomes increasingly complex when moving in a dissection of time and space of a cultural field, historical social space and also different philosophic traditions. My main goal is to remain in line with the underlining premises of this work; a historical perspective sensitive and disapproving of the entrenched cleavages of social sciences with an eye on both utopian thought and cultural competition. The following then becomes by necessity the definition of a social historical system. The aim is to provide an outline of the functioning of such a system, when referring to systems in the framework of this thesis.

In my perspective of a system I have used as broad guidelines seven requirements set down by Christopher Lloyd for a materialist, structural and historical theory of social change. Main points of interest in Lloyd's requirements are the coherence of a realist model of social structure, commitment to real non-observable systems of social rules, theoretization of general structural processes and transformations and a theoretization of the relationship of the social enquirer to social realities and of phenomena to structures

⁴⁵Tilly 2001, 403.

⁴⁶Dahrendorf 1990, 37-71.

as well as specification of the non-observable layers relation to observable evidence.⁴⁷ The same definition should then be applicable to different layers of social relations from action to policy and cultural competition to philosophical thought. Most importantly my definition and its use should not inherently exclude any temporal continuity.

A system by its premises defines its borders. These borders are not static, and therefore are not actors in relation to their contents, because the contents have defined them. Following the same logic structures are by definition real as they constitute the “borders” of the system

A structure is a set of relations, for a system is built upon relations. One must avoid the trap of imagining singular objects bound by relations. These structures of relations are non-observable since, they take effect in correlation to and under the molding sway of the existing matter of the system, which in itself has time and space only through the regulating force of the structures. Structures cause change. The notion of structural change is axiomatic.

The possible variants of thought, mentality and ideas are defined by the location of the thinker(s) in the non-limited society or system which they also mould. And as you may already guess, by location we do not merely mean physical presence, but, to take an example, the internet amongst many things is in itself a location and also has many locations.

Underlining the word general and its vagueness we may derive three general guiding theorems of processes. First, we have that of a chain reaction. Whence, the relational field of a system becomes fixed in position that allows the spread of certain type of a changing force, we may experience a chain reaction that either acts to confirm or to transform the relations. The reason that allows such a chain reaction is commonly either a static state of affairs or a rapidly changing one, both of which may lead to non-transformative and transformative change. Second, we have a clash, the clash of two or more types of relational structures that occurs faster (even too fast to grasp) or slower (even too slow to realize) and for reasons as various as relations in the system itself intensify their interaction. This may happen in a geologically, materially and temporally confined manner and on the level of thoughts and ideas on any imaginable level of their

⁴⁷ Lloyd, Christopher: *Structures of History*. Blackwell, Oxford 1993.

relations, such as culture or technology. The effect is an adaptation, a synthesis of the clashing relations, never the wiping out of any “participating” relation network. Third, the counterpart of a clash is a bifurcation of interacting systems; again a complete bifurcation is naturally never achieved. This may lead to intensified changes or statism (also statism is never complete) or neither in the respective systems.

Social phenomena defining the structures should always be seen horizontally and vertically. Horizontally in the sense of the interaction they have had and can have on other social phenomena and vertically by extending our scope a level above and below the most obvious layer at hand. The defining character of the structures should always be taken into consideration together with their coerciveness and discursiveness towards future. This does not mean apparent norms or lines of action but the perceived outcomes to follow from the interaction of the phenomena and the structures.

The non-observable layers are in fact not non-observable, but social change in itself. In the systems’ (and in our) concepts of the future lie the possibilities for change, transformative, non-transformative or conforming, and in different manners.

These are the structures, for only they define possible and eventual action. Therefore the traditional weakness of a holist approach - criticized by Lloyd⁴⁸ as well - is actually only a weakness of those who see the present from the viewpoint of the future, which is pure impossibility in a self-constituting system. They take an imagined leap into the perceived future constrained by their scope of possibilities and then begin to explain. They thus treat the present as they have the past, dogmatically and universally. Inherent here is a telos of which holism is then blamed for, when holism in fact becomes a prerequisite, for also the observer constitutes the system. This is an inherent problem in any purely deductive-nomological model.

An important conclusion is one related to the actions of the observer of the system. Whenever we make observations of a system, through these observations we transform its and our scope of possible action. Transitologists have widely engaged in this with minimal focus on the form of their observations or the transformations they bring about. And even though some claim to theorize universal laws or predict possible outcomes, in fact they merely put forth a wish, knowingly or unknowingly, that things would end up that way. The action of a historian “only” studying the past is in fact a non-action

⁴⁸ Lloyd 1993, 181.

molding the future. Change is not the opposite of constant or the opposite of non-change. Change is default in a system that is governed and created by relations. Such is also the only conceivable system, when the laws of the system are in fact results of its structure and vice versa. Hume was wrong to assume that causality could not be proved, in fact causality is the basis of existence, but agency cannot be proved. The agent needs to become an object to be an agent; the social scientist must objectivate the process of academic labour.

Politically the major consequence of a system here is the navigational force of a dominant regime which is confirmed and conformed to by non-transformative resistance. Transformative change is then active shaping of the structures (that are the past, as the moment is constantly reproduced by the past) to widen the scope of possibilities for the future.

*Thus, there is a relation of concepts to situations that is open and indeterminate, but nevertheless a relation of reference, be it of emergence in and for a situation or of application in a new situation.*⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Wagner, Peter. *Theorizing Modernity*. Sage Publications, London 2001b, 128-129.

2 Transitology under Observation

We arrive at the subject matter of our examination, transitology. Bearing in mind we are interested in its historical construct from all sides of the relation, vertical and horizontal, it occupies as a cultural field.

Economics as it is in the 21st century is in the words of Robert Gilpin a toolbox of formal models and analytical techniques. The concern here lies in the application of any analyses for they require measurable forms. Thus models define the subject of economics. What is transition then from the point of view of economics? It is the definition of what was incommensurable before. And as Paul Krugman argues, no models for development have been created.⁵⁰ What is transition from the point of view of political science? It is applicability of universalist models of action on contingent political situations. Thus we are left with transition into economic measurability and universalist predictability. What prescribed this condition? As considered in the Introduction, to answer the question I must first take one step backwards in history before continuing with theoretical steps.

2.1 The Post-Modern Challenge in Social Sciences

Repercussions of the post-modern challenge - undermining the aforementioned dialectics of social theory and social thought - were felt in the social sciences at the time when the first forms of transitology began to take form in the late 80s and early 90s. The post-modern challenge undermined historical constructions of social structures and rather perceived the world as a mere continuous flow of images and reflections, non-binding and uncontestable. Steven Best writing on historical vision in 1995:

*The horizon of a liberatory future is increasingly clouded by a growing sense that the fundamental dynamics of change, transformation, progress and emancipation are over.*⁵¹

The post-modern challenge did not emerge out of the blue. During the 20th century the extension of the horizon of the possible had redefined politics-as-activity.⁵² This

⁵⁰Gilpin 2001, 49-50.

⁵¹ Best 1995, preface XI.

politicization was inherently contestational by nature, possibilities opened new possibilities and counter-possibilities. An institutionalization of the forms of searching and most importantly defining political possibilities followed, escalating with the bipolar world order. This institutionalization during the 20th century began from the innate rationalization of an individual's horizon of possibilities, from Nikolai Chernyshevsky's empowerment of the individual himself searching for and evaluating the relations between the possibilities, described in his 1863 novel. And with the rise of social engineering such rationalizations were harnessed to form systems of thought most eminently within the spaces of nation-states and then in the union of socialist and nationalist thought, as Lenin's insistence on concerted aims and action. Lastly politics originating from utopian thought eclipsed as was exemplified in Jeffrey Sachs's discreditation of the whole contestation for the horizon of the possible in favor of one system. And indeed, at the time Sachs wrote his article *What is to Be Done?* it appeared that no politicized institutions could exert enough control over knowledge formation, to claim stake as to legitimately search for possibilities – widen the horizon of possible action - not to mention value relations between the possibilities. A reactionary structural reformation in society - discussed in chapter 5 and described by Alain Touraine - was and is still underway. In this situation, characterized by a lack of historical dimension, since about 1980, the idea of the decline of politics was a hot topic in western social sciences and had a popular character to it and was also widely addressed and supported in academic literature⁵³.

Thus, in the wake of the post-modern challenge, prophesized by the likes of Baudrillard and Fukuyama, we find our defining moment, the collapse of the soviet system of belief. Post-modernism in social sciences undermined our dialectical other, historical materialism and later dependency theorists, both perceiving the realities of the world to be structured from the flows of capital and social violence and class, core and ideological conflicts. In reference to the dialectical roots of transition brought up in this paper it is worth mentioning that it is a common tendency of many of the varied “postmodern” accounts to dismay and refute Enlightenment concepts⁵⁴.

⁵² Palonen, Kari: *The Struggle with Time. A Conceptual History of 'Politics' as an Activity*. Lit Verlag, Hamburg 2006, 234.

⁵³ Palonen 2006, 9-10.

⁵⁴ Best 1995, 21.

The postmodern depreciation of history did not have the same impact on empirical modernists, neoliberal and neoclassical political economists as they need not derive any assumptions from historical legacies. And as such they functioned as something of a naturalist pathway for social scientists out of the post-modern challenge. I use the term naturalist because this escape mitigated the requirement to describe and explain one's own perspective, distancing the researcher and his field as mere operators of causal variables. But, a relativism of perspectives – perspectivism - in social theory is unintelligent. No perspective is without an origin. I follow the social theorist Peter Wagner in answering how these origins behoove us:

*Perspectivism takes an entirely different shape as soon as one is able to address the question of the point of view from which a perspective emerges; it turns into a pluralism of related and relateable perspectives.*⁵⁵

The incorporation of the post-modern challenge and its origins and dialectics into an analysis of the emergence of transitology becomes an important structural fault line.

2.2 Transitology Paradigm

Around the time of the rise of the post-modern challenge the unexpected democratizations in Greece, Portugal and Spain in Southern Europe and in many Latin American countries gave the impetus for the influential study on transition by the political scientists O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead, stating that no preconditions for democratization need be present, and focusing on elite-level causal variables. This also contested the paradigm of modernization theories based on historical progress explained with universalist preconditions. Yet, at the same time a new coming of modernization theory focusing on global rather than national trends was claiming ground in explaining the Soviet 80s. President Reagan and Secretary of State Schultz referred to the “worldwide democratic revolution”⁵⁶. Jordan Gans-Morse in his article states that as the Soviet Union fell apart these two stood as distinct and contrasting approaches to regime change, but that yet they are often packed together and criticized

⁵⁵ Wagner 2001b, 130.

⁵⁶ Carothers, Thomas: *End of Transition Paradigm*. Journal of Democracy, 2002, 13, 1, 5-21.

as representatives of the same paradigm.⁵⁷ How these traditions intertwined around the formation of transitology is examined in this thesis.

I perceive that from these positions around the 80s began the formation of the scientific field of transitology, with inbred distinct cleavages, yet clear positions on causal relations, reflecting a deductive-nomological model on politics and a macro-level modernization paradigm attributing development and progress a moralistic dimension.

In 2002 the democracy assistance expert Thomas Carothers declared the end of transition paradigm. He argued that holding on to transitology is retarding policies of democratic assistance. The hopes of a quick progress toward liberal democracies assumed by early transitology should be abandoned to better analyze political change in countries that are locked in their ‘transitional’ structures in many ways.⁵⁸ Carothers argument is based on the relation between policy and theory. It seems that coming to 2002 transitological theory could no longer tap into the post-socialist political space without contestation, thus I argue we are witnessing a transformation and consolidation of transitology. This consolidation happens through a capitalization of the existing character of transitology. Carothers observes certain structures consolidating themselves in the transitional countries, entrenched and regular political patterns⁵⁹, instead of a constant progress towards democracy. This will reflect onto transitology, shape it and allow it to anchor around specific features stemming from its original character.

Two years after Carothers proclamation Gans-Morse concludes that post-communist⁶⁰ studies are no longer hegemonically dominated by transitology. He states that transitology as a term is used in multiple ways referring to a variety of studies. More often than not it is the critics of transitology that employ the term when referring to approaches aiming at generalizable theories.⁶¹

According to Gans-Morse ‘conventional transitology’ committed to pre-given futures or pasts of capitalism, democracy or authoritarianism and positing a notion of development with comparisons to institutions and concepts of consolidated democracies is criticized by a variety of authors. They are then joining the discourse on the form of transitology

⁵⁷ Gans-Morse 2004, 20, 4, 320-349.

⁵⁸ Carothers 2002, 5-21.

⁵⁹ Carothers 2002, 9-11.

⁶⁰ Morse uses the term post-communist.

⁶¹ Gans-Morse 2004, 333-334.

when criticizing it. In mid 1990s arguments on behalf of an open-ended transformation were posed. Even though Gans-Morse fails to find actual evidence of teleological notions of progress in transitological articles he concludes that transition is often perceived as transition specifically to democracy.⁶² In Gans-Morse's analysis the content of transitology is seen to differ from perceptions of it.

*Competing definitions of "transitology" have multiplied the contexts in which the term is used, thereby contributing to the widespread impression that a transitological approach to the study of regime change dominates post-communist studies.*⁶³

I do not fully follow Gans-Morse in his separation of studies in transitology and the debate over its nature. These are mutually inclusive discourses. Gans-Morse also defines transitology too narrowly as the so-called mainstream and most criticized perspective on post-communist studies. He himself then goes to demonstrate this inclusive and wider character of the cultural field that I refer to as transitology with two points. Firstly, Gans-Morse concludes that the debate on deleterious effects of perceived 'mainstream transitology' has detracted attention from the actual goal of post-communist studies: to build new theory. Secondly, he states:

*The variety and uniqueness of post-communist regimes is fertile ground for exploring novel political and economic systems, and this diversity presents the opportunity for analysts to develop new ways of utilizing ideal types so as to theorize transition in a non-teleological yet theoretically rigorous manner.*⁶⁴

We find thus that the cultural field is far from fading away under an internal strain of various approaches, but consolidating itself upon the very cleavages discussed by Gans-Morse. The discourse is part and parcel of the reproduction of transition paradigm.

Three years after Gans-Morse's account on debates of transitology and call for a move forward the Lithuanian political scientists Jankauskas and Gudžinskas conclude in their article on transitology's condition in 2007 that "the report of transitology's death was an exaggeration". They thus conform to Gans-Morse's suggestions. Jankauskas and Gudžinskas go as far as to declare transitology's renewed potential in its normative

⁶² Gans-Morse 2004, 333-337.

⁶³ Gans-Morse 2004, 340.

⁶⁴ Gans-Morse 2004, 344.

aims, which they define as bringing democracy to the world.⁶⁵ We are able to observe the self-reflection and reproduction of the cultural field. How this reproduction takes place is affected by the origins and character of transitology examined in this paper and answered in the conclusions of this paper.

I therefore believe to arrive at a satisfactory definition of transitology by connecting the studies in societal transformation in the post-socialist space to a viewpoint on unprecedented change and incorporating the debate on transitology into the cultural field as a binding force legitimizing the cultural competition and distinctions.

2.3 Transitional Instruments and Incommensurability

Taking then into account three factors of economics described by Robert Gilpin I am able to outline the nature of discursiveness present in transition. The first factor is that the history of events leading to disequilibrium is not relevant for the restoration of equilibrium. Secondly, the wide variety of different schools of economic thought all start from different assumptions. And thirdly, Modern economics assume that the individual is the basic unit of society.⁶⁶ When these three factors are superimposed upon a class of social existence deprived of a unifying middle class ideology, what happens is the strengthening of lateral movements imposed by the hidden dispositions of the class habitus⁶⁷. These dispositions are homogenous with the marginalizing cleavages of modern world-economy. This is in essence the discursiveness of transition from theories of political economy to the individual or the household.

Many proponents then and prominently Anders Åslund, who is one of the most prolific commentators of transition as well as one of the most distinct in representing a certain view perhaps aptly described as economism, consider transition and its market economic reforms to be and to have been highly successful⁶⁸. In certain countries the reforms were implemented more rigorously leading to better results, once we then also add an extra component of country specific and varying geopolitical and historical

⁶⁵ Jankauskas – Gudžinskas: Reconceptualizing Transitology. Lessons from Post-Communism. *Lithuanian Annual Strategic Review*. 2007, 181-199.

⁶⁶ Gilpin 2001, 58-65.

⁶⁷ The concept of habitus and its implications will be elaborated upon later once embark on our examination of transitology as a cultural field.

⁶⁸ Åslund, Anders: *How Capitalism Was Built. The Transformation of Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and Central Asia*. Cambridge University Press. New York 2007, 305.

legacies we arrive at the conclusion of the effect of transition policies: Today these 21 countries that were once according to Åslund so similar have become rather diverse⁶⁹, some succeeded in heading the advice others not. Åslund clearly opposes a historical perspective. Measured through econometrics the countries now appear different whereas under socialism they seemed similar. Therefore apparently a clear cut escape from the chronic constraints of 'static' socialism has been achieved. On the other hand Derluigan amongst others emphasizes the historical differences of these countries stemming from especially the year '68.

Åslund quotes Tolstoy, and I remain unsure if he here fails to see Tolstoy's irony in an attempt to be ironical or fails to see his own irony in an attempt to use Tolstoy's. *All happy families are similar, but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.*⁷⁰ A temporal dissection of space to create relativistic unities seems apparent, the attribution of failures to particulars and successes to universalisms.

Similarly, writing in his 2004 published introduction to his own 1995 article Stanley Fischer, the 1994-2001 First Deputy Managing Director of IMF, tells us that in 1995 controversies within the IMF were abounded, shock therapy or gradualism, inflation stabilization or high inflation to launch growth, fixed or flexible exchange rates and manners of price and trade liberalization and privatization. Conclusions from the early experience, before 1994, were extracted through the EBRD's⁷¹ Transition Report⁷² and from indices on the extent of structural reform. The problem at hand was still that data and methods of analysis were not yet sufficiently refined to answer further economic questions.⁷³ Fischer writes that now, a decade after the transition began, transition countries are no longer treated as a single group.⁷⁴

In 1995 Fischer sets the establishment of a market-economy as the goal of transition. Major problems arise from the quality of data available for policy formulation. Conceptually, Fischer states, prices for goods were not comparable to world market

⁶⁹Åslund 2007, 305.

⁷⁰Åslund 2007, 11.

⁷¹European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

⁷²Annual publication of the EBRD on the status and direction of transition.

⁷³Fischer 2004, 397.

⁷⁴Fischer 2004, 398.

prices and at a measurement level the data is not corresponding to basic macroeconomic division of private and state markets.⁷⁵

Once trade and price controls were lifted in the beginning of the transition process inflation skyrocketed reaching commonly three-digit annual inflation rates. When systematic differences in data arise Fischer simply changes the population under measure not to breach contextual commensurability.

In his Fischer's analysis determinants of growth and inflation are derived through econometric analysis, whereas explanatory variables are the macroeconomic policies and the extent of structural reforms being measured as an economic liberalization index. This liberalization index was based on data of EBRD's Transition Reports 1994 and 1995.⁷⁶

It is noteworthy that macroeconomic policy as commonly understood in market economies did not exist in more than half the countries before 1992⁷⁷ and yet is 1989 taken to be the year when the transformations began.⁷⁸

Fischer concludes that growth requires stabilization and stabilization leads to growth. However, he continues, there are alternative interpretations of the connection between inflation and growth, for example it may be that stabilization succeeds only if growth follows or that there actually is no link between growth and stabilization and the link is rather forced by international financial institutions. Fourthly Fischer suggests that it may be that stabilization and growth are simply part of a larger set of actions.⁷⁹

On another article Stanley Fischer examines the question: "How long it will take the CEE countries to reach the income levels of the poorer West European countries." Fischer examines six countries of the CEE between 1937 and 1992 and concludes that a relative decline between them and other European countries has happened during the 55 years, but amongst the six the relative positions have not changed.⁸⁰

⁷⁵Fischer 2004, 417-418.

⁷⁶Fischer 2004, 418.

⁷⁷Fischer 2004, 418.

⁷⁸Fischer 2004, 411.

⁷⁹Fischer 2004, 421-423.

⁸⁰Fischer 2004, 429.

As Brian Snowdon aptly states, the transition experiment became and has remained a fertile ground for imaginative research and controversy among economists.⁸¹

Snowdon continues that earlier both Bukharin and Luxemburg prophesized the coming of socialism to be the end of economics as a science⁸², from what we are able to detect now from the account of Fischer in establishing transition measurements, they were not wrong in the sense, that a serious re-economization has been required for modern economics to be able to begin its analyses. And only through a re-economization it is possible to conduct any analyses.

Snowdon, an economist and researcher, goes to quote a 1991-1992 study in which the values of Russian citizens are shown to be more those associated with capitalism and thus, according to Snowdon, demonstrating that unlike Homo Sovieticus, Homo Economicus is and was alive and well.⁸³ Could we interpret this as potential correspondence to economization?

Whether the key institutional structures supporting a market economy, which in the core countries have developed organically over a long historical period, can be transplanted to transition countries has been one of the key issues to be contested. Among other issues that gradualists advocate have been the importance of informational imperfections, the importance of social and organizational capital and the need for legal and institutional structures. The counter argument has often been that in the context of the East European transition, the issue at hand was the adjustment of an already industrialized economy. Within this economy the task at hand was the reallocation of resources into efficient and competitive sectors.⁸⁴ Efficient in what manner and competitive against who are not issues that would be dealt with, they are inherent in the toolbox of economic theory, for only variables within the same system, thus following similar equations, can be commensurable. Following the philosopher of science Ian Hacking, an apparatus to generate data is created, the apparatus is then naturally judged by its ability to produce data and incommensurability results from phenomena being produced by fundamentally different techniques⁸⁵. This is very much the extent of how

⁸¹Snowdon, Brian: *Globalization, Development and Transition*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham. 2007, 143.

⁸²Snowdon. 2007, 161.

⁸³Snowdon. 2007, 162.

⁸⁴Snowdon. 2007, 174.

⁸⁵Bourdieu 2004, 74.

data sets instrumentally restrict inquiry and can be seen as a cause for incommensurability and ahistoricity before and after the establishment of the apparatus.

After the initial boom, once serious competition had arisen, but the economization process was still taking its first steps with the EBRD Transition Reports having begun in 1994, a 1996 World Bank paper *From Plan to Market* highlights the importance to recognize the historically determined initial economic and political circumstances of each economy⁸⁶. These properties are then said to affect the range of reform policies available. In such a manner the new economies are then divided and an initial zero-state is constructed. On the level of global political economy this functions in balancing the large dialectical cleavage between the cold war systems in favor of country specific cleavages. Such a move can be seen to ease any discursive action and improve system wide panopticism by creating new economized relations. Panopticism is a term initially taken from Michel Foucault by Stephen Gill and refers to endogenous structures of control, born out of the formation of the system itself. A simplistic example of panopticism in a system would be the Concert of Europe.

2.4 Universal Concepts for an Evolutionary Transitology

Returning to Anders Åslund, early on in a 1992 article he analyses the problems of the 1990-1991 reform plans. He begins by describing consensus among scholars on the issue that transition must be achieved rapidly and that there must be a comprehensive switch to a fully-fledged market economy. Åslund lists shortcomings in the principal reform programs of Gorbachev in 1990 and its continuation, the 1991 Anti-crisis Program of Prime Minister Pavlov and in contrast the Shatalin Program of August 1990. These shortcomings include among others neglect of democracy, relations between center and the republics, unfounded belief in gradual transition and excessive confidence in the state apparatus and the inability to conceptualize a market economy.⁸⁷

*As is evident from these formulations, I focus on the instruments of actions rather than the consequences of action or non-action (such as inflation or shortages).*⁸⁸

⁸⁶Snowdon. 2007, 174.

⁸⁷Åslund Anders: *A critique of Soviet Reform Plans*, in Åslund ed.: *The Post-Soviet Economy*. Pinter Publishers. London 1992, 167-168.

⁸⁸Åslund 1992. 168.

Åslund lists democracy, form of the union, false beliefs, confidence in state or perhaps the state itself and conceptualization of a market economy as instruments of action. In a sense Åslund is correct. It is clear that beliefs and conceptualizations clash with and constitute the habitus of social groupings. On the other hand Åslund concludes that these are preconditions to be solved before “true systemic change can be unleashed” and that problems to solve these issues are caused by a lack of intellectual comprehension⁸⁹. Obvious observations here are, whether democratization or change of beliefs is not systemic change, surely not if it is assumed that some beliefs are false were as others represent the truth. It seems clear that the nature of transition for Åslund is normative and teleological in the sense that only with certain policy and understanding of the ways it is achieved, it, interestingly unsurprisingly, may be achieved. Truth then becomes coined in the terms from which it originates and in which rests the legitimacy of the truth-speakers.

Accepting such legitimization Rajan and Zingales bring forth the idea of constantly existing institutions, which means that whenever reforms are not carried through completely, true free market capitalism is not reached and new elites benefiting from the initial change quickly begin to resist further reforms.⁹⁰ On the other hand, a complete reform to market capitalism is unprecedented in history. The hypothesis in itself sets forth two premises. First, that a complete reform according to certain guidelines within defined time and space is possible and, secondly, that there exist a universal market capitalism that can be reached and does not in itself change as the system in which it operates changes.

In his conclusion on the *Rise and Fall of the Socialist System* Snowden refers to Kornai when defining the uniqueness of the Central Eastern European transition, The ‘Great Transformation’ as it is termed by Kornai⁹¹. The CEE region is according to Kornai now back on track economically and politically with the ‘Western civilization’ in the economic and political sphere and the transformation has been complete.⁹²

⁸⁹Åslund 1992. 177.

⁹⁰Rajan - Zingales: *The Persistence of Underdevelopment: Institutions, Human Capital, or Constituencies?*. Working Paper. National Bureau of Economic Research. Cambridge 2006.

⁹¹Kornai J.. *The Great Transformation of Central Eastern Europe: Success and Disappointment*. Economics of Transition. July 2006.

⁹²Snowdon. 2007, 184.

Besides falling into a weberian definition of western specificity, with such definitions Snowden and Kornai join in line with parsonian visions of systemic convergence towards a western model. According to Peter Wagner such a view is related to a distorted view on modernity, in which either the independence or autonomy of the individual or the institution is assumed. The autonomy of human action is then reflected to a contest of conceptualization attempting to define the level, from individuality to institutions, of autonomy.

*And this is where they are led to profoundly misconceptualise modern social life. Terms such as 'democracy' or 'market' certainly have one of their points of reference in the idea of autonomy of human action. But they provide only such general indications as to be almost devoid of content.*⁹³

Transition has been a fertile, devoid, ground for reconceptualizations of old concepts of modernity.

A depiction of the evolutionary nature of transition studies or transitology may be read from Taraz Kuzio's description of the quadruple nature of transition. He argues that once the study of transitions moved from Latin America and southern Europe, where in most cases national integration had been achieved, to the post-socialist states, it was originally assumed that transition would be regime-based with two goals, democratization and marketization. Weakness of the post-socialist states and their institutions then introduced the third aspect called stateness into transition.⁹⁴ All very applicable to the commonly told story of how post-socialist transition has been understood. He then goes further by arguing for the separation of the nationalism question as a fourth pillar from the stateness question.

Although while bringing forth the idea of the evolutionary nature of transition, Kuzio is continuing this tradition and in his approach attempting to further elaborate the field of transitology, thus, being himself a political scientist interested in questions of nationalism, deriving new lineation for the field study. Such barriers ease the dissection of the scientific and political space of transition studies and therefore establish grounds for more precise theoretizations derived from already elaborated traditions, the opening of ecological niches on the bourdieunian cultural field. The social sciences consist of

⁹³Wagner 2001a, 166-169.

⁹⁴Kuzio Taras: *Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives on Nationalism*. Ibidem-Verlag. Stuttgart 2007, 83.

coherent groupings of subject matter distinct from one another. Some new niches are born as others die out, but this or any interdisciplinary approach does not tackle the some 150 years of inquiry and its premises⁹⁵.

Putting forward his argument Kuzio tackles the established study of transition and derives his arguments from the partly failed process of transition in post-socialist states and from the “still insufficient work undertaken by political theory vis-à-vis the relationship between nationhood, the state and a liberal market democracy.”⁹⁶ Though maybe bound by historical events, Kuzio presents these concepts as objects of study and not objectivations in themselves. The effects and limits of the act of objectivation need to be objectivated as well, in order to, in the first place, objectify the social conditions of possibility⁹⁷. That is, we cannot treat our acts of objectivation as the limits of policy. This is important in regard the discursive and coercive nature of transition itself, when with its help scientific observations are converted into policy.

Kuzio ask whether post-socialist transitologists went far enough in the creation of their framework. He further elaborates his point of view with the argument that modern liberal democracies require more or less unified nationalist polities to develop.⁹⁸ In such a manner Kuzio removes earlier national and liberal projects from their space and time, assumes the nomotheticity of the concepts connected to them and argues for the superimposition of them, as they are now more perfectly understood, into current transitology with the temporally discursive claim that only then these countries may evolve into modern liberal democracy, into the, reportedly acclaimed, historical and philosophical ideas from which Kuzio began his conceptual journey. Even with the risk of repeating myself I would like to stress the epistemological tautology and the violence with which these concepts are recast. And as such our concepts indeed seem to represent “indications devoid of content” or the Aristotelian grey mass, forever separated from its form, thus full of potential but with no capability of actualization.

From the reasonable observation of the historically differing nature of post-socialist transition from other transitions Kuzio arrives at the conclusion of inadequacies of the concepts and analytical divides, instead of tackling the question by attempting to answer

⁹⁵Wallerstein 1991. 237-239.

⁹⁶Kuzio 2007, 85.

⁹⁷Bourdieu 2004, 93.

⁹⁸Kuzio 2007, 86-88.

why such obvious differences exist. Thus observing transition as something defined and insulated by its borders in space and time, as an empirically analyzable machine.

2.5 Objectivated Transitology

In their elaborately objective and conceptually historical study Åberg and Sandberg explore the formation of social capital in post-socialist countries, with Ukraina and Poland as their examples. They conclude both that sociocultural roots take on a different meaning in a post-communist context compared to Western countries and that historical path-dependencies do matter.⁹⁹ Deriving from the historical experiences of the countries they conclude that through political oppression distrust on the state has created social capital based rather on intra-group cooperation than bridging of interests. This divide has then been either enhanced, as in Nazi Germany, or suppressed as in the Soviet Union. On the other hand they see the same historical roots as strengthening continuities in basic political-culture and institutional set-ups. Åberg and Sandberg then derive explanations for the post-communist experience from the conceptual history of democracy itself.¹⁰⁰

The institutions of actual democracy evolve, yet the fundamental idea of democracy remains more or less the same historically. This is the reason why definitions of the institutional traits of democracy are time- and space-dependent, while the general notions of democracy are not.

Following Åberg and Sandberg it is easy to ask whether it was the uniqueness of the post-socialist transition - though Åberg and Sandberg themselves do not use the concept of transition - and the lack analytical tools and concepts which ushered in the second wave of transitology with an eye for new temporal dissections with institutionalism(s) and further spatial dissection with social and national perspectives or whether time and space, creating our unit of analysis, had affected the capitalist-economy and social order and therefore the definitions of transition in the system, the scientifically institutional traits of the concept, were so open for the taking and then easily contested.

⁹⁹ Åberg - Sandberg 2003, 258.

¹⁰⁰ Åberg - Sandberg 2003, 258-268.

Åberg and Sandberg differentiate the process of democratization from the concept of a democracy itself and depict the paths for democratization as far from given.¹⁰¹ They may then observe the post-communist democratization without having to burden transition with anything, before beginning their objectivation. They are partly able to avoid positioning themselves on the field of transition, instead duplicating firmly established objectivations. Thus, they are easily able to refrain from the use of the concept itself; the novelty of post-socialist transition likely enables this. If transition would become too drastically defined and epistemologically connected to earlier definitions of economics, political science and so forth, it might prove harder for Åberg and Sandberg to proceed in the same manner without arousing normative debates on the subject of their study.

2.6 Demands for Initial Conditions

Some scholars of transition and transitology make attempts to come break away from universalist categories and succeed in partial revisions of aspects of research often treated in an a priori non-objectivated manner. Yet, this easily leads to a discrepancy between the bulk of their concepts and the revised aspect, which is then compromised by a demand for initial conditions. This means that they trace the cause of this discrepancy to a moment in time of transition and describe it as misunderstood or unnoticed. This problem is then amended with a description of the conceptual or factual conjuncture. Better than nothing, but this is still partly teleological in explaining the past problems from the present context of transitological thought.

In her study of politics and property rights in the post-soviet space the political scientist Jessica Allina-Pisano arguments through a case study of a Ukrainian collective farm, that despite the low-to-mid level institutional capabilities of functioning, what mattered during the land privatization schemes of transition were the structural adjustment policies on the national level, which determined the new incentives. The options to an individual were, and would have been according to Allina-Pisano dispositions towards

¹⁰¹ Åberg - Sandberg 2003, 258-268.

either resisting redistribution of the collective's land or to resign himself of the benefits and informal distribution networks of the collective to begin anew.¹⁰²

Thus we may observe both the marginalization caused by renewed state level habitus imposing demands in individual dispositions as well as a coercive move leading either to marginalization or discursiveness between formerly unimportant divides.

In dealing with the dynamics of the interaction of transitional policies and actual historicity Berkeley based professor of economics and political science Gerard Roland makes the claim that in the context of transitology rent-seeking is tied to initial wealth and power. On the other hand initial wealth and power might have affected the privatization policies leading to further rent-seeking opportunities.¹⁰³

*When trying to understand the positive political economy of reforms in transition countries, it is important to have a better understanding of the social and political initial conditions of reforms, which should reach beyond the economic initial conditions that have often been analyzed in the literature so far.*¹⁰⁴

Thus, when neglecting the correspondence of the unit of analysis and time and the structural constraints and allowances of both, we are in risk of constructing tautologies, the shorter and more decisive the dissection of space and time, often the more distinct the tautology. In such a situation the only evidence left to support the hypothesis are linkages to the established cultural field(s) of science. The explanan and the explanandum are too close to each other

Emphasizing the importance of the initial social and political conditions Roland comes halfway in the direction of structural historicity, yet he creates a divide by still treating the post-initial state as the unit of analysis. Roland continues in favor of a more world-systemic analytical point of view of the coercive force of the world-economy by asserting that aggregate uncertainty applies more to privatization processes than restructuring or reallocation.¹⁰⁵ Privatization processes create vertical cleavages within trust networks, similarly as was the case with Allina-Pisano, whereas restructuring and reallocation, in order not to simply abolish value within a system, have to be built upon existing chains of productions and dispositions. Aggregate uncertainty can then be seen

¹⁰² Allina-Pisano, Jessica.: *The Post-Soviet Potemkin Village*. Cambridge University Press. New York 2008.

¹⁰³ Roland 2002.

¹⁰⁴ Roland 2002, 11-12.

¹⁰⁵ Roland 2002, 14.

as a normal condition from imposing vertical divides as any new and existing dispositions lack a historical habitus with which to interact and relate.

*Abstentionism is perhaps not so much a hiccup in the system as one of the conditions of its functioning as a misrecognized – and therefore recognized-restriction on political participation.*¹⁰⁶

Non-action is effective action in itself and a constituting function or even a cleavage of the system. And it applies to the political, social and economic spheres at the same time, as these are not separable from each in any other except in a purely abstractly conceptual manner, not to deny that such a separation would not have its effect also.

Moving in between the spheres of politics and economy and respectfully attempting to address the question of the historical view Hungarian political scientist Laszlo Bruszt and American economic sociologist David Stark argue that the postsocialist experience is the problemacy and challenge of simultaneously transforming property regimes and extending citizenship rights. Writing in 1998 they state that “each of the East Central European societies has solidified its democratic institutions and achieved economic growth”. Bruszt and Stark see the postsocialist laboratory as a source for new concepts and categories to understand economic and democratic change in general by elaborating upon older literature in light of the postsocialist experience. Through a comparative lens they seek to avoid the all pervasive telos of neoliberalism and rather understand ongoing conflicts shaping the horizon of possibilities.¹⁰⁷

They hope to discern the varying legacies of socialism as differing building blocks for democracy and varieties of capitalism. Stressing not to make too strong a priori distinction between strategies of survival and of innovation, they allot significant weight to non-state and non-market interorganizational networks. Bruszt and Stark’s analysis attempts to shed the constraints of one sided or universalist theories in favor of discursive strategies of de-liberation outside the state and market hierarchies. They

¹⁰⁶ Bourdieu Pierre: *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Routledge, London 1994, 398. With the system Bourdieu refers here to established liberal democracies, from which social sciences are derived.

¹⁰⁷ Stark, David – Bruszt Laszlo: *Postsocialist Pathways. Transforming Politics and Property in East Central Europe*. The Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. Cambridge 1998, introduction.

suggest that an extension of horizontal accountability in time and in scope would similarly extend time horizons of policy makers and the public.¹⁰⁸

Bruszt and Stark attempt ambitiously to tackle the issues of non-transformative politics and policies and turn back the development of a diminishing scope of possible action. And rightly they evoke the distinctive forms of social accountability on the political field to constrain the competition between classes of differing conditions of existence. Through such activity the cultural field might be able to consolidate itself in a mutually enforcing response to the exerted influence of encroaching and entrenched traditions of social sciences.¹⁰⁹

Such a jump to the bandwagon of transitology has partly been successful amongst the East Central European authors such as Bruszt himself, yet the double competition of the cultural field in response to the world-economy, reflected upon policy makers connecting vertically to both the public habitus and to traditions of thought, has, at least in hindsight, not consolidated itself even in East Central Europe.

Even though refreshingly optimistic in their account, Bruszt and Stark would seem to misjudge the weight and form of transition studies on their own account. Differentiating pathways and varieties of capitalism offer the denomination of an extended scope of possible action but do not emancipate the *topos* of politics for meritocratic competition, for extending the horizon, rather instigate a headless search amongst the informal networks for the leprechaun's pot of gold. In their analysis Bruszt and Stark fail to tackle the question of objectivating their own analysis, they attempt a relocation of the dislodged habitus and cultural field by not taking over history but rather affirming to it on the political level, by tackling – rightfully so – the dominant problem of ahistoricity with an ahistorically derived competition against the discursiveness of the dominant regime. Where arguing in favor of historicity in policy making they dismay the issue in regards their own concepts. Their point of view is still one determined by the position they themselves occupy.

Therefore Bruszt and Stark merely explicate non-transformative, thus systemic resistance. Nonetheless they deliver an accurate account and critique of features of

¹⁰⁸ Stark– Bruszt. 1998, introduction, 188-201.

¹⁰⁹ Stark– Bruszt. 1998, 188-201.

transitology, most importantly the to-and-fro dissections of time by the likes of Burawoy or neoliberalists and –statists.

I covered in this chapter the basic theoretical issues we encounter in transitology when observing it from the viewpoint of my perspective. These issues revolve around spatial and temporal generalizations and ahistoricities of either or both the concepts and systems of thought behind analysis or the relation between the analysis and its object. The issues were presented through authors vividly representing particular problemacies in particular and transitology in general, where other authors may fall victim to similar obstacles or mixtures of them. The authors and issues observed here also provide a cross cut of the depth and evolution of tackling the various problems of objectivating ones own research approach historically, so that a similar type or level addressing that issue was not represented multiple times.

Having exemplified the field and problemacy in it I will next describe the interplay or competition that is reproduced within the field through a specific example.

3. Reflective Approaches

*A regime may encompass forms of social reproduction that together constitute conditions of existence for development in a particular historical period.*¹¹⁰

What is the connection of a regime¹¹¹ to transitology and how would this connection affect the mentioned constituting conditions of existence for development. Reflecting on an example of a reading from transitology I will glance at transitology through a specific example and then elaborate on radical political economy and world-systems analysis. We intend to better grasp the analytical tools or tuning forks employed here and their possible relation to competition within this particular cultural field, to the horizontal relations of transitology with the help of the given example. This becomes necessary now as I will observe relations of approaches or debates, not the actual approaches. Relations are non-observable as such and can therefore be detected only through their effects on the wider system. These effects become more easily detectable when set into comparison with systemically differing approaches, World-systems analysis and Stephen Gill's political economy in this case. Therefore I stress that I do not directly operate with these analytical tools, but they are to be employed as catalysts.

I have chosen a debate between Joseph Stiglitz and three Polish economists for two main reasons. Representing an American and East Europeans they all worked as policy advisors on transition, their debate focuses on the so-called Washington consensus, which Stiglitz critiques and the East Europeans on their part defend. Secondly, they are already debating over an historical interpretation of already conducted policies, which they approach from very fundamental economic points of view, rather than observations of society

3.1 Stiglitz's Debate

Joseph Stiglitz, at the time Senior Vice-President of the World Bank, argues in a 1999 article, that the "great economic experiment" in Eastern Europe, that is the transition, was ill handled due to a "misunderstanding of the very foundations of market economy". That it was carried through simply by following neoclassical textbook

¹¹⁰ Gill, Stephen: *Power and Resistance in the New World Order*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2003, 94.

¹¹¹ Gill's usage of the concept of regime refers to its gramscian connotations.

economics under the sway of the Washington consensus.¹¹² Stiglitz continues by raising a number of issues in which economic theory was implemented under this aegis in an action not goal-oriented manner. Thus imposing measures that in themselves were to bring remedy instead of instigating action, which would have been based upon existing dispositions.

How to understand this in the context of this study? For example, according to textbook theory, privatization together with competition form the basis of a working Pareto efficient market economy, thus forming the basis for creation of extra monetary value in a free market system. In the post-socialist space privatization was pursued discursively as means to break up existing networks of trust relying on soft-budget constraints, and without due respect to an institutional framework to establish dispositions for competition. Soft-budget constraints themselves were pursuing the same goals. Therefore, without due dispositions, the obscure and deep-rooted choices of the *habitus*¹¹³ of stakeholders in previously existing networks will not correspond with the reality of relations between goods and groups¹¹⁴. To simplify, if both of the boxers are not confined by a ring, then the other may simply run away having successfully delivered the first punch, breaking up the pursued Pareto-efficient reallocation.

Returning to Stiglitz, in his article he argues further that the entries and exits, entrepreneurship and bankruptcy were implemented in a similar fashion by reinforcing bankruptcy policies into a system lacking both the incentives for and a culture of entrepreneurship, thus stripping the exits of their rejuvenating nature of providing fertile ashes for new sprouts to grow in. Thirdly, a productivity and creativity encouraging reward system of market capitalism – profits - requires both explicit and implicit trust, termed social and organization capital by Stiglitz, to function. Both of which were and are lacking far behind in the post-socialist societies, at least in the terms they are established in core market economies. This inevitably led to short term hit and run profiteering. Stiglitz continues with a similar pair of ownership and control and then moves on to elaborate the issues.

¹¹²Stiglitz, Joseph. *Whither Reform? – Ten Years of Transition*. Paper presented at the Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics. Washington DC, 1999.

¹¹³ "habitus" is a term employed by Pierre Bourdieu to describe the historically acquired set of dispositions of social action and perception of a certain class of agents. I use the term more in reference to a class of conditions of existence rather than discernible agents. It is further discussed in chapter 3.

¹¹⁴Bourdieu 1994, 454 and 466-467.

The points of critique raised by Stiglitz are referring to a lack of institutional and structural frameworks for the reproduction of benefits to work through an interaction of social base versus capitalist gains. This interaction is seemingly set into a historical continuum of interactively constituting structures, thus presenting capitalist growth as a developmental project. Stiglitz is promulgating specific historicity which is created in his view through the working of antinomic pairs which seem to stimulate economic growth.

Stiglitz goes on to elaborate agency chains encompassing the majority of the population within successful market economies and proposes the shortening of the chains in transitional countries to begin constructing the foundations of a market economy¹¹⁵. In a global division of labor this would mean a willed though perhaps necessary - from a structuralist view - step backwards within the division of labor, within the process of accumulating added value between societal and productive relations. After which reorganization on the proper founding principles could commence.

With the aforementioned Washington consensus Stiglitz refers to an ideological approach to reform characterized strongly by shock therapy in terms of its effectual parts. The historical roots of this approach he traces dialectically to Jacobinism and Bolshevism, referring to a similar dialectical analogy as was done in chapter 1.

*The shock therapy approach tried to use many of the same [bolshevik] principles for the reverse transition. ...With the right textbooks in their briefcases, the "market Bolsheviks" would be able to fly into the post-socialist countries and use a peaceful version of Lenin's methods to make the opposite transition.*¹¹⁶

Stiglitz then gives an account of the ideological motives behind the economic reformists very similar to disciplinary neo-liberalism from the perspective of radical political economy. This is followed by an account of decisions to reform top-down rather than bottom-up, as political decision-making is viewed in semi-peripheral structures by world-systems analysis.

Dabrowski, Gomulka and Rostowski, all of whom acted as advisers for formulating transitional policies, published a critique of Stiglitz's account. They accuse him of fundamental misunderstandings in three aspects of the transition: A misinterpretation of

¹¹⁵ Stiglitz 1999, 142-143.

¹¹⁶ Stiglitz 1999, 154.

the Chinese transition, which was viewed by Stiglitz successful in stimulating a bottom-up reform process, a mis-description of the Russian transition and a failure to consider implications of the few in their account successful “third models” represented by countries like Estonia, Poland and Hungary.¹¹⁷

In their rebuttals the adviser trio, instead of denying the encompassing dynamics put forward by Stiglitz, argue against single causalities. They mobilize into a debate over the causal order of the explanan and the explanandum. For example, in the case of the complementary behavior of privatization and structural framework for fair competition the trio asserts that an immature political system led to corruptions followed by capital flight. This is probably true, but a different matter. For whether early privatization or an immature political system is the cause for corruption it is irrelevant to the argument of a self-constituting dynamic of capitalist development, where interaction of economic and social factors is pursued. Conceptual differences incommensurate the debate which is in actuality addressing economic fundamentals and is most ironically supposed to be a historical debate seeking its premises from historical events. Thus, though accurate in their claims, the adviser trio and Stiglitz shout at each from their own garrisons on opposite sides of a moat, supporting the entrenchment of each other within transitology much in terms of a mutually reinforcing bourdieunian competition¹¹⁸.

If Stiglitz is promulgating evolutionary development through antonymic concepts, much in a Schumpeterian manner, Dabrowski, Gomulka and Rostowski are advancing universalistic structures which in themselves foster a natural environment for capitalist development. To exaggerate for the sake of clarification, they are pinning a naturalist view against a structuralist view, yet employing the same concepts, thus negating any synthesis, but rather entrenching their own positions. In this light it is unsurprising that Stiglitz connects the Washington consensus to Jacobinism and Bolshevism.

*Thus, in our view, there were no existing norms at all for the reformers to build new institutions upon.*¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Dabrowski - Gomulka – Rostowski: *Whence Reform? A Critique of the Stiglitz Perspective*. Journal of Economic Policy Reform, Vol. 4, Issue 4, 2001, 291-324.

¹¹⁸ With bourdieunian competition I refer to a cultural contestation in which the actors in the process of competing against each other also consolidate each other's position through the very act of competing.

¹¹⁹ Dabrowski - Gomulka - Rostowski, 2001, 11.

Since the trio assumes a zero state they advocate the need for faster and more encompassing reforms. Does the '89/'91 divide instigate a normative need for fast or slow reforms? Engagement into debate over sequencing and pacing follows, where Stiglitz would see that:

*These agency institutions need to grow incrementally and evolve over decades*¹²⁰

The same types of causality based rebuttals continue in regards different aspects of economic development brought up by Stiglitz¹²¹.

*We also argued that the idea that the new post-Communist economic system should have been built in such a way as to exploit pre-existing (communitarian) social norms rather than copying real existing western capitalist institutions is mistaken...*¹²²

It is unsurprising in this sense, that Stiglitz already in the title of his response to the critique proclaims the two sides of the moat not to be poles apart.¹²³ Stiglitz dismisses much of the privatization debate, which was previously raised as an example, more as semantics than as something real, whereas the three considered it as a serious matter of economic formulae and empirics. World-systems analysis would describe this on a policy level as two reifications of an inner contradiction of a capitalist world-economy, the reproduction of its own inner logic, as a failure to incorporate both sides of the *Methodenstreit* into the analysis. The reproduction of this contradiction on the material level of a cultural field through this very debate is connected to the mutually reinforcing bourdieunian competition within transitology. The material connection comes in the form of positions, recognitions, pay check and easiness to further your own work (prestige).

3.2 World-Systems Analysis and the New World Order

An overarching introduction to the world-systems analysis and Stephen Gill's radical political economy follows before we return to the example of Stiglitz's debate.

¹²⁰ Stiglitz 1999, 142.

¹²¹ Dabrowski - Gomulka - Rostowski, 2001, 25 and 27. On the issue of liberalization and competition or regulation and property rights.

¹²² Dabrowski - Gomulka - Rostowski, 2001, 26-27.

¹²³ Stiglitz, Joseph – Ellerman, David: *Not Poles Apart: "Whither Reform?" and "Whence Reform?"*. Journal of Economic Policy Reform, Vol. 4, Issue 4, 2001, 325-338.

Three defining characteristics of a world-systems perspective are the unit of analysis, which is the world-system, the *longue durée*, which in its simplest form insist on the historicity of the world-system and thirdly the particular world-system we live in, the capitalist world-economy.¹²⁴ World-systems analysis situates itself through these three outlining aspects in conceptualizing social sciences. In examining social change it abides by our definition of a system.

From a world-systemic perspective any definition of transition as a particular phenomenon of ex-socialist states will helplessly fall into the old trap of modernization theories. The claim of constrained societal progress on a national or regional level has been rejected at least with the rise of globalization studies. Not to say that social scientists would not still knowingly and unknowingly observe many a phenomenon in a purely Newtonian, empirical manner.

Separations between ideographic empirical observations and historical legacies occur even more often when dealing with time and chronology. The inevitable historicity of any societal action or relation per se, as such is the nature of any causality which, if not common sense in social behavior, was fundamentally proved by quantum mechanics. The importance of the non-ideographic nature of any social event is emphasized when formulating policy to guide societies into a desired future. At this point I wish to stress the importance of the intertwined and inseparable nature of historicity and the unit of analysis, whereas time and space are categorically separated in our cognition, presupposing any such separation **before** analysis will lead to distortions in observations of social relations and (and therefore by our definition also of) social change as was briefly discussed in chapter 1.4.

Finally, the socialist states were never a world-system of their own, but solidly connected to the world-economy and at best antisystemic, thus conceptualizations are subject to realities of the existing system.

The nobles may have elaborated a vision of the universe in which they were understood to control natural forces or to mediate interactions with the deities and so commoners were supposed to be obligated to support these sacred duties

¹²⁴Wallerstein 1991, 266-272.

*by turning over their produce to the nobles or contributing labor to sacred projects*¹²⁵

The above summarizes coerciveness within hegemonies, such as presumably present in nomothetic transition policies or ideological hegemony in general, termed disciplinary neo-liberalism by Stephen Gill and seen as the ideological fuel for the cadres, those competing within the existing cultural fields, of the global economy by the world-systems approach. The systems elaborated by both world-system approach and Gill's radical political economy are seen as self-constituting, therefore under constant change and as much capable of influencing their future as they are also defined by their history.

Stephen Gill's new world order assumes a hegemony of disciplinary neo-liberalism through coercive politics and panoptic control, borrowing from Foucault. The main consequence of which is the limitation of the scope of possible political action, the individual is harnessed to maintain the control mechanisms sustaining the system¹²⁶. A struggle between neo-liberal domination and resistance is at the heart of this. The resistance may be transformative or passive in nature. Through transformative resistance the scope of political action may be widened, horizon extended. This is historical and dialectic both horizontally and vertically, towards policies and societies and cultural competition and philosophical argumentation. That is to say that the system constitutes itself, a cumulative and repetitive process. This is in contrast to; say for example, standard realist or liberal approaches to the workings of the international political economy.

The concept of an historical bloc, an alliance of ideological and materialist forces through a united class is important for radical political economy. It is similar to the historicity of a class habitus, anticipating particular meaning and value in relation to the correspondence between goods and groups. Economists such as Stiglitz and the trio criticizing him would thus belong to the dominant bloc of the moment as they fight over the definition of that correspondence against each other instead of aiming to actively transform it.

The main thrusts of critique that Gill thus presents to universalist traditional economics is the impossibility of ahistorical freedom, which is the type advocated in any rational

¹²⁵ Chase-Dunn, Christopher – Babones Salvatore J. (ed.): *Global Social Change. Historical Comparative Perspectives*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 2006, 47.

¹²⁶ I shall further elaborate on this development as it happened in the political *topos*.

agent based economic formulas. The critiques idea resonates closely with utopian social mobilization.

When analyzing change, that is when conducting any social research, Gill sets social structures as the fundamental character of the unit of analysis¹²⁷. This is a conceptual difference with world-systems analysis, which insists on the global economy to be the proper unit of analysis. The difference stems from Gills gramscian roots in contrast to WSA's¹²⁸ more materialist Marxism. Therefore when reflecting causal analysis within transitology Gill's conceptualizations might prove more fruitful and the world-systems approach when investigating the dissection and relation of analysis to time and space. This distinction guides our application of concepts in examining transitology from the two otherwise very similar fields.

Systemic subjection of peripheral and semi-peripheral economies constituting the system is a joint view and thus both approaches advocate systematic dependency in contrast to modernist developmentalism.

The communist project is seen by Gill as a counter-hegemonic maneuver whereas WSA would describe it as a semi-peripheral attempt to shed the chain of core power through a redivision of labor, rather antisystemic then counter-hegemonic. In the end WSA perceives antisystemic movements however deemed to failure because of the inability to escape the system, in Gills terms this means a lack of transformative power whereas WSA would see it as an effect of polarization and bifurcation, an inner contradiction of the capitalist world-economy simply accelerating its expansion. Manuela Boatca has described from a world-systems perspective the attempts in Romania before World War II to bring forth antisystemic change:

*In the capitalist world-economy, counter-hegemonic ideologies rooted in a different cultural background than that of the dominant core have constituted a frequent means of challenging core power from semiperipheral locations.*¹²⁹

So far these attempts have but yielded stronger core intervention or a period of non-transformative counter-hegemony. Though, Boatca concludes that semi-peripheries are - besides a source of systemic crises which means a pressure vent of the system - the

¹²⁷ Gill 2003, 24.

¹²⁸ World-Systems analysis

¹²⁹ Boatca 2006.

most potential source for transformative politics. Thus, the two approaches are not far from each other.

These critical approaches may widen our understanding of transitology from one particular perspective to allow an objectivation of relations hastily built during the tumults of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. It is clear that by nature these approaches contradict with the bulk of transition studies; therefore it is self-evident that conflicts between them are to be found. What we are to concern ourselves with, is the form of these conflicts, not simply their existence.

3.3 Concrete Connections

*The old institutions could not function as the social norms that had under-pinned them no longer existed.*¹³⁰

Criticizing Stiglitz, Dabrowski, Gomulka and Rostowski see that the fall of the socialist structure deprived legitimacy from the old institutions. Stiglitz on the other hand sees that the introduction of new economic policies deprived legitimacy from institutional arrangements. A world-systemic aspect would point to the disappearance of a certain division of labor, therefore also to the disappearance of the old meritocratic social norms which were built upon that division, a dismantling of the reactionary class habitus. Now, incorporation deeper into the capitalist world-economy, without an influential middle class automatically brings forth the effects of semi-peripherization. Therefore, we should not be asking whether the erosion of the old system or the rise of the new system constituted the state of existence at a given moment, but rather identify a historical change within the social space.

A similar example in relation to radical political economy can be made of the flight of capital after privatization in a financially weakly institutionalized state, also a causality debate touched upon by Stiglitz and his critics and arguably providing scientific legitimization to established parties contesting the direction of the causality. Gill perceives that there exists an evolving dialectic relationship between the nature and scope of markets and the forms of state regulation. Therefore: “capital as a social relation depends on the power of the state to define, shape and be part of a regime of

¹³⁰ Dabrowski - Gomulka - Rostowski, 2001, 11.

accumulation.”¹³¹ And a form of such power disintegrated in ‘89/’91. Thus any expected causality would have to be instigated by the weakness of capital as a social relation when observing it in the post-socialist space. This condition would appear to underline the importance of a causal debate more in terms of appropriation within the cultural field of transitology and based on disciplinary views derived from the established social sciences.

Following Gill we might also point out the balance between coercive neo-liberalism and non-transformative or, deriving from Ernst Bloch, pessimist reactionarism towards neo-liberalism¹³². An important concept in Gills theory is the disciplinary aspect of neo-liberalism. He elaborates on this by quoting the World Bank World Development Report of 1997, “on ‘locking in’ the rights of capital and thereby ‘locking out’ democratic control over key aspects of the political economy”¹³³ Therefore, he continues, “...to coercively contain the contradictions between capital accumulation and social reproduction...”¹³⁴. Dabrowski, Gomulka and Rostowski then strike a similar chord with this definition, “...corruption (which we take to be a measure of the degree to which norms are not suited to the needs of a market economy)...”¹³⁵. This means two things. Firstly, an explanatory value of Gill’s conceptualizations in bringing out the underlying fundamentals, which I argue are not clearly present or discussed in the debate between Stiglitz and the Trio. Secondly the definition for a pessimist non-utopian reaction, that is denying such inherent problems as corruption to derive from incommensurability and incompatibility of the social space with discursive economic policy demands and rather focusing on the connection between policy and theory to have been understood erroneously. Further elaboration on this incommensurability follows in chapter 4.

To further exemplify the meaning of the concepts of coercive and disciplinary policies and their contradictions with social reproduction we may quote Gill: “By the same token, the processes that capture and include normalized segments of the population can

¹³¹ Gill, 2003, 96.

¹³² Panitch - Gindin: *Transcending Pessimism: Rekindling Socialist Imagination* in Katsiaficas ed.: *After the Fall. 1989 and the Future of Freedom*. Routledge, New York 2001, 175-178.

¹³³ Gill 2003, 196.

¹³⁴ Gill 2003, 196.

¹³⁵ Dabrowski - Gomulka - Rostowski, 2001, 17.

serve to exclude or marginalize others”¹³⁶ And then point out an explanandum of marginalization from world-systems analysis:

*The way in which the pressures of a stagnating world economy affect national policies certainly varies from country to country, but the ability of any single national society to construct collective rationality is limited by its interaction within the larger system*¹³⁷

We should then attempt to look at a possible correlation of such policies with the theoretizations from which they are derived, but first we outline a narrative for the historical conditions that defined those theorizations.

¹³⁶ Gill 2003, 193. See chapter 10 for elaboration.

¹³⁷ Chase-Dunn – Babones, 2006.

4. Contingencies and Structures around Transitological Thought

Having observed problemacies of transitology and their interplay with the use of concepts derived from radical political economy and world-system analysis I describe the characteristics that can be associated with early paths to transitology and transitological thought. In line with the research undertaken in this thesis I am not writing an early history of transitology, but attempting to construe it. Coupled with examples, formulations to discover a first shaping form of transition are made – bearing in mind reflections from Gill and Wallerstein. In chapter 4.3 I extend the search from the horizontal relations and history of transition studies within social sciences to the vertical implications towards social space with the concept of habitus.

4.1 Nature of Transition Theories

As one polish economist has put it, “You don’t try to cross a chasm in two jumps”¹³⁸

As the then Harvard economist and advisor to Poland and Yugoslavia Jeffrey Sachs illustrated in his article¹³⁹, transition was from the beginning seen as a shift from one system to another with no connections or realities but an empty chasm in between. I argue that even with new critical theories of transition, such as regulatory, evolutionary, governance and keynesian¹⁴⁰, this attitude has persisted.

Interestingly as well, and in a book intriguingly dedicated to Yegor Gaidar, Yacek Rostowski argues that macroeconomic instability is in itself a transitional phenomenon. He sees the fall of the state system as the reason for the adoption of the market and as the cause for the ‘jump to the market’, since resource allocation was no longer dictated. Therefore, the birth of markets was a natural requisite.¹⁴¹ The birth of transition can be thus linked to the need for policy formation.

Therefore the importance and justification of an overlook and theoretical problematization of transition theory is in fact the flipside of my work. The claim is that

¹³⁸ Sachs 1990.

¹³⁹ Sachs 1990.

¹⁴⁰ See for example Pickles, John - Smith Adrian ed.: *Theorising Transition*. Routledge, London and New York 1998.

¹⁴¹ Rostowski Jacek: *Macroeconomic Instability in Post-Communist Countries*. Clarendon Press, Oxford 1998, 14-15.

transition theory is an instrumental as well as a constitutive part of transition itself and cannot be seen, as it is commonly seen on debating fronts as a set of universal and nomothetic guidelines, but the fronts and the dialectics between them and then again between society and theory must be interpreted as an organic part of the actual “transition”. Following the same sentiment I further argue that transition is not a process that is undertaken and has a beginning and an end but should be treated as a conceptualizing and conceptualized term referring to an era in time and space. Much in the way as terms such as industrialization or nation-building are used.

Instead of being treated in the manner it should be, research is advocating the uniqueness, peculiarity and extremities of transition, often in order to promote a particular approach or attack another, whereas transition could be conceptualized as a historical and constitutive part of societal reproduction in a global world-system.

*Whoever sets out to implement Utopian plans will in the first instance wipe clean the canvas on which the real world is painted*¹⁴²

The quotation is from Ralf Dahrendorf’s article written in 1990 in which he sets an open society as the ideal goal for ex-socialist states to pursue. As such it is part of a wider struggle of prioritizations and processes. Dahrendorf attacks the notion of utopian goal-oriented and systemic action to put forth his own emphasis on an open-society as the prerequisite for any societal progression. At the same time he utilizes the full force of western political thought to discredit the communist past and any possible Third Way approach¹⁴³ to transition. Dahrendorf prioritizes society in the economy, society, politics divide. Attacking the notion of utopian social planning Dahrendorf sides up with its counterpart; He derives nomothetic laws from his conceptualization of an open society, which when implemented, he argues, may permit the appearance of a working modernist capitalist society, he outlines an ahistorical causation.

The distinction between natural law and utopian plans¹⁴⁴ as discussed by Jürgen Habermas¹⁴⁵ in relation to transition societies represents another divide on the theoretical battleground that is the transition.

¹⁴²Dahrendorf 1990, 56

¹⁴³The term 3rd way is commonly used in this cotext literature to describe a welfare society model that would seek to preserve selected positive sides of socialism.

¹⁴⁴For the distinction see Bloch, Ernst: *Natural Law and Human Dignity*. MIT Press Massachusetts 1986. Originally *Naturrecht und menschliche Würde*. Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt, 1961.

Where utopian planning needs to distance itself from the existing system, the natural laws approach draws from that system ahistorical laws. This divide then roughly also establishes the line between the hegemonic approach, termed often as Washington consensus¹⁴⁶, (natural laws) and the anti-hegemonic (systemic utopian planning). This is an overall description on the onset of transitology as the post-modern challenge cleared space for revitalization of the modernist paradigm within western social sciences.

Both approaches as well as revisionists in between attempt to claim ground on specific contestable aspects. The hegemonic side could be described to have been the dominating modernist and neoliberal theory emphasizing neoclassical economics and the anti-hegemonic as the constructivist theories looking at the interconnectedness of economics, social behavior, institutions and say for example incentives and agency:

*The crisis of the dualistic reading of political economy has led to the growth of alternative claims surrounding the ways in which state, market and institutions intersect.*¹⁴⁷

The constructivists, as the ones quoted above, argue for the existence of varieties of capitalisms depending on the society at question and that therefore an interconnected bottom-to-up approach yields true results. Nevertheless, as the authors admit, this approach fails to take into account the uneven relationship and development of systems of accumulation and regulation on global and on sub-national level¹⁴⁸. These are more strongly present in radical political economy which is employed here in search of conjunctures between theory and reality and most importantly their relation.

Thus the anti-hegemonic approaches gained ground after an initial boom and failure of strictly economical and neoclassical policies. They were quick to move in once any openings for an alternative approach appeared. For example in 1998, advocating a bottom-to-up interconnected industrial restructuring John Pickles directly attacks the natural law approach:

¹⁴⁵Harbermas, Jürgen: *The Past as Future*. Polity Press, Cambridge, 1994.

¹⁴⁶See Stiglitz 1999 and Gill 2003.

¹⁴⁷Smith – Swain: *Regulating and Institutionalising Capitalisms. The Micro-foundations of Transformation in Eastern and Central Europe* in Pickles, John - Smith Adrian ed.: *Theorising Transition*. Routledge, London and New York 1998, 25.

¹⁴⁸Smith -Swain 1998, 29.

*Of Course, one might argue that the pathology of transition described here is merely 'transitional'- a legacy of the past that will be swept away by the emergence of a rational calculus of cost-benefits, market incentives and entrepreneurial drive.*¹⁴⁹

But Pickles himself fails to realize that the pathology of transition indeed is the state of transition and as such, forgive me for the tautology, no anomaly at all, a semi-peripheral cleavage between the historically constructed social habitus and systemic coercion, where the model of meritocratic interaction between structures and historical dispositions experienced a swift change.

After the initial harsh rejection of the utopian and Marxist models of social engineering and together with the slight anti-hegemonic counter-swing a rereading of Marx has contributed to similar observations of these dichotomies. Quoting for example Meghnad Desai:

*In a sense it was not a matter of the end of history but the end of hope.*¹⁵⁰

These observations have often led to a rejection of nation-state based socialism or the old dialectics and to a call forth for a new global and renewed bottom-to-up version of Marxist thought¹⁵¹ and a reawakening of Marxist spirit¹⁵²

To sum up, the classical divide of economy, society and politics was at the onset split by the dialectics of utopias and natural laws. This was then furthermore split into two sides by the theoretical and epistemological debate between top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top approaches, connected closely to the scope and level of analysis. As an end result we have an ongoing fight to claim rights to the uniqueness of transition. I argue that on the case of both or all sides this leads to a situation which Dahrendorf in his imperativeness prescribed for the utopians:

*The probability must be high that in the end we will be stuck with transition*¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹Pickles, John: *Restructuring State Enterprises* in Pickles, John - Smith Adrian ed.: *Theorising Transition*. Routledge, London and New York 1998, 190.

¹⁵⁰Desai, Meghnad: *Marxin Kosto. Kapitalismin uusi nousu ja valtiokeskeisen sosialismin kuolema*. Gaudeamus Helsinki University Press, Helsinki 2008, 356. Translated from the Finnish back to English by the author. Original text: "Yhdessä mielessä ei ollut kyse niinkään historian lopusta vaan toivon päättymisestä"

¹⁵¹Desai 2008 and Derrida, Jacques: *Specters of Marx*. Routledge. New York 1994.

¹⁵²Derrida 1994.

¹⁵³Dahrendorf 1990, 56.

For none of them addresses the question of historical continuities without temporally dissecting transition from where it grew out of. State socialism is analyzed, but only to describe a ground zero on which transition would then build upon. Therefore not only transition societies but transition theory has been savaged, exploited and used, actually simply conjured up, by advocates of the ever competing lines of demarcation within social sciences. As can be read for example from Smith and Pickles' statement:

*At the end of the twentieth century there is a need, then, for an alternative set of conceptual frameworks on transition to challenge the neo-liberal hegemony...*¹⁵⁴

For another example I return to Åslund whom I described as treating transition normatively and teleologically and to Åberg and Sandberg who did see the trouble to differentiate between concepts and processes. In this regard Åslund represents the opposite of Åberg and Sandberg, but in a very understandable manner he also represents the beginning of the double transition as described by Kuzio in that he is simply applying objectivizations of concepts, such as democracy and the markets, to policies and referring to shortcomings as a lack of intellectual comprehension.

In conjunction they are all then molding the concept of transition. Kuzio is both writing the evolution of the history of transition from the mentioned zero-state and then maturing it through complications. Åberg and Sandberg lineate the concept scientifically to the existing narrative by evoking classics of western thought and Åslund entrenches the policy normative discursiveness, the nomotheticity. Thus they both compete against each other for the right to write of transition, claiming their position on the cultural field, but not against each other, and in such they may be seen to mutually justify each other in concert. They are going from the concrete to the abstract, from the particular to the universal. For such action a concept must evolve, so that it is apparent to all that they speak of the same subject matter. The process of (scientific) legitimization concerns also the relationship of subjects regarding the object¹⁵⁵, according to Bourdieu. In relation to this Bourdieu also cites Ben-David, "the allocation of scientific recognition is usually supranational and, at least to some extent, supradisciplinary process; the effect of any particular bias is thus minimized"¹⁵⁶. Mutual

¹⁵⁴Pickles, John - Smith Adrian 1998, 5.

¹⁵⁵Bourdieu 2004, 71-73.

¹⁵⁶Bourdieu 2004, 76.

competition within the field is strengthening particular positions and even allotting them biased entrenchment.

How may one then say something of transition itself, of the top concept devising the particular cultural field of competition, such competition which then trickles down as actual policy? One way of seeing the issue is not dissecting time and space and linearizing both¹⁵⁷, by objectivizing our object of study¹⁵⁸ and by comprehending our approach in order to avoid the two.

4.2 Role of Transition Theories

Representing the Marxist counter-swing Derrida describes the dominant discourse and its incontestable self-evidence as a threefold conjuncture of political culture, media technology and scholarly culture. These together fight and squabble crisscrossing each other simply to together assert and produce hegemony¹⁵⁹. For similar reasons Wallerstein persists on calling the World-systems analysis an analysis instead of a theory to separate it from the demarcations and reproductions of cleavages based on an ahistoricity of either conceptualization or processes. If are to believe Derrida the instrumental and constitutive role of transition theories would appear clear. Applied to Derrida's theorizing, transition theories are used in line with modern media technology to reproduce political culture divided and defined by the scholarly assumptions on the nature of society in transition nations. Applied to Wallerstein they are used to justify either the refusal of existing cleavages or the creation of new ones enabling the exploitation of differing classes or groups through the means of production driven by the logic of a capitalist world-economy.

As the neoliberal agenda of the 1980s had deregulated capital flows and eroded state financial regulatory power¹⁶⁰ it functioned in the benefit of the described and argued instrumentalism of competing theories of transition. The Eastern European states embarked on free market liberalization determined by the natural laws modeled on western capitalist societies of the moment. The dismissal of the existing system then

¹⁵⁷Massey, Doreen: *Samanaikainen Tila*. Vastapaino, Tampere 2008.

¹⁵⁸Bourdieu 2004.

¹⁵⁹Derrida 1994, 52-53.

¹⁶⁰Desai 2008, 257-260 and Haggard - Kaufman 1995, 3.

caused the real values of social benefits to shrink to a fraction of earlier levels¹⁶¹, but nevertheless:

*Between 87-88 and 93-94 most post-communist countries increased cash social transfers.*¹⁶²

The increased cash transfers did then little to counter the effects of inflation and devaluation of domestic currencies. These developments were then followed in the mid 90s by the counter swing of socially based constructivist type transition theories.

*Social sector reforms have moved from the margins to the centre of the transformation agenda*¹⁶³

These social sector reforms are then again implemented in a more utopian manner, with indifference to structural positions derived from the near and far past. For example Joan Nelson points out the lack of templates, the lack of institutions and moral perceptions as obstacles to social reforms and calls for a revitalization of state capacities, all of which are or could be actually easily traceable to socialist systems and found there. This serves as an example of how looking at the history of transition theories we are able to see the dialectical play of different approaches of social sciences. They are not simply molding transition societies but also through the disputes among themselves and the interaction between actual societies they are embedding the societies deeper into the global system, following Stephen Gill, coercively and discursively as they obtain control of systems of knowledge reproduction.

The instrumental and constitutive role of transition must be traced through an interconnectedness of theory and society. The political economy of transition works in an instrumental way in strengthening and upholding cleavages of the modern world-system¹⁶⁴ and the coerciveness of the hegemony¹⁶⁵ within it.

¹⁶¹Nelson, Joan: *Social Costs, Social Sector Reforms, and Politics in Post-Communist Transformations* in Nelson - Tilly – Walker ed.: *Transforming Post-Communist Political Economies*. National Academy Press, Washington 2001, 249.

¹⁶²Nelson 1997, 249.

¹⁶³Nelson 1997, 248.

¹⁶⁴See Wallerstein, Immanuel: *The Essential Wallerstein*. The New Press, New York 2000.

¹⁶⁵See Gill 2003.

4.3 Historical Habitus

Describing the destruction of the soviet socioeconomic system in 1992, Vladimir Kosmarskii recognizes three factors under which changes take place. Firstly, the demolition of once stable and habitual economic stereotypes, secondly alterations in the status of traditional social groups and change of structural appearance in respect new groups and thirdly disappearance of social values inculcated by the administrative system.¹⁶⁶ Though Kosmarskii uses these structural developments to analyze possible attitudes towards transitional policies and to level a playing field, a ground zero upon which to begin, we may also attempt to deduct from them reasoning as to why so. Not dissecting the present from the past, but instead joining them together.

Social attitudes towards governmental policies develop varied patterns. Whereas the soviet model mainly favored reactionary and anticipatory dispositions towards governmental action, the transitional model's enabling and at the same time coercive¹⁶⁷ policies are geared towards facilitating action and initiative based attitudes towards themselves. When such a clash occurs, it is clear that those marginalized experience inadequacies to form dispositions towards the new social divisions seek other means of sustenance.

More generally, households survive by turning 'inwards' and expanding the activities of their 'private' sphere¹⁶⁸

The reactionary nature towards Soviet policy was forged throughout the political and policy changes of the late 60s and early 70s: A move from Khrushchev's thaw to brezhnevian double morals. Under Khrushchev a new generation of soviet citizens entered office in relatively progressive times and enjoyed social mobility offered by access to the education system. The brezhnevian move of affirming their benefits in return for public acquiescence depended on reactionary survival strategies. This is described in Derluguian's account of the moods in between trust networks and on the other hand of the resilient and adaptive navigating of the 60s trained nomenklatura during the Fall.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ Kosmarskii Vladimir: *Public Attitudes to the Transition* in Åslund ed.: *The Post-Soviet Economy*. Pinter Publishers, London 1992.

¹⁶⁷ Gill 2003 and Wallerstein 2000. Inner contradictions, cleavages.

¹⁶⁸ Hann 2002, 93. Preface to part II.

¹⁶⁹ Derluguian 2005, 29-103.

Åberg and Sandberg connect responsiveness and social capital as commonly to be traits of democracies and therefore difficult to analyze in hegemonic and totalitarian regimes. But they continue that on the other hand the political system in soviet states was inclusive by force.¹⁷⁰ Relating their criticism to the aspect of conceptualizing transition as a scientifically created and defined phenomenon, I ask whether responsiveness or disposition were simply reactionary and affirmative towards the state and therefore difficult to analyze by any means of social science bound by the conceptualization of the state and political mobilization as a universal form of action, derived from the core states. The applicability of traditional political science on the soviet state or semi-peripheries in general may be questioned and at the same time I would be reluctant to question the formation of horizontal trust networks among actors, which in return facilitate specific habitus over time. A good example of such dispositions were most strongly present in the Central Asian soviet states, where division between public reactionary dispositions, that is behaving as expected in return for certain benefits, was heavily contrasted with private manifestations of religious and tribal dispositions, active and agent based. Yet, the importance of this divide is that these two personalities or habitus coexisted without contradiction, and were indeed considered the status quo.

Statebuilding is then torn between soviet legacies of state functions and the intertwined impositions of a transnational economy. A clash between any unifying state policies and normative economic policies is sure to resonate in the class habitus. No positive policy program is possible and cleavages such as ethnicity, nationality and linguistics serve "to erect barricades to keep at bay the forces of the modern world"¹⁷¹.

The state then seeks to take the anticipatory stance as we move from utopias to nomothetic derivation that is, based on what is rather than what can be. It seems clear that once a reactionary and anticipation based social habitus¹⁷² is subjected to rapid changes towards action and initiative based policies, what we would experience and in fact have experienced is a shift of survival strategies towards existing non-state networks rather than a complete voluntary construction of new non-monetary appropriation cultures on the cultural field. Again we find examples in Derlugian's

¹⁷⁰ Åberg _ Sandberg: *Social Capital and Democratization*. Ashgate. Hants. England 2003, 99-101.

¹⁷¹ Hobsbawm 1992, 169-177.

¹⁷² My usage of Bourdieu's term is based on understanding that it suitably describes dispositions of a non-deterministic nature.

description of intelligentsia-turn-rebel¹⁷³ especially on the semi-peripheries and peripheries of the ex-developmental state, where these non-monetary networks were unable to compete against the newly introduced global finances¹⁷⁴. The same development is described by Hobsbawm as a move from an ideological battle of revolution and counter-revolution to state power intertwined with transnational economies and intervened by non-nationalist outside powers. Yet, at the same time the social revolutionaries of the systemic changes have been committed to national autonomy¹⁷⁵. But, partly in the strongest loci of the semi-peripheries and peripheries and the core of the ex-state networks, some actors were able to abuse the conflagration of old trust networks, so to say dive in to the flames to hoard what was left unguarded, the strongest of this were the party-functionaries-turn-millionaires, red oligarchs.

The coerciveness of the new policies demands initiatives in order to survive as passiveness is rewarded through marginalization. When an anticipatory habitus is faced with such expectations and is unable to survive through existing non-state trust networks, as mentioned above, the only remaining option is to find or build new survival strategies or engage in resistance. The problem here is that the previous state networks were a form of resistance themselves against the now dominant interaction channels, against market capitalism. Thus new expressions of resistance seek their legitimacy somewhere else, with nationalism and religion being the prime examples, or in more everyday behavior, engaging in locality level practices to escape discursive demands:

*...building complicated structures and networks for subsistence production within and around the household.*¹⁷⁶

This duality of systemic coercion and action demanding structures is evident in the ever growing “lumpenproletariat” or, as called by Derluguian, sub-proletariat class of the world-system. The structurality of it was buoyantly demonstrated in the ‘89-‘91 upheavals of now ex-socialist states, where the sub-proletariat formerly residing and

¹⁷³Derluguian 2005, 62.

¹⁷⁴See Gill 2003. Coercive and disciplinary neoliberalism.

¹⁷⁵Hobsbawm 1992, 169-192.

¹⁷⁶Pine, Frances: *Retreat to the household?*, in Hann, C.M. ed.: *Postsocialism. Ideals, ideologies and practices in Eurasia*. Routledge, London 2002, 96.

acting in the socialist structures was both semi-successful and certainly visible in its actions¹⁷⁷ during a time of world-systemic changes dramatically reflected on localities.

*Habitus is thus at the basis of strategies of reproduction that tend to maintain separations, distances, and relations of order(ing), hence concurring in practice (although not consciously or deliberately) in reproducing the system of differences constitutive of the social order.*¹⁷⁸

In simple terms, with historical habitus here I refer to the observation that each perceived and also strictly analytical causal account refers to a set of preferences¹⁷⁹, which are historical and spatial. This simple logic, then becomes complexional in a clash of normative liberalization and historical dispositions of the post-socialist space. On the surface this is evident in the changing role of post-socialist nationalisms, where nation-building is no longer a global political program, as put by Hobsbawm, but rather a catalyst for other developments¹⁸⁰.

¹⁷⁷ Derluguian 2005, 150-154.

¹⁷⁸ Bourdieu, Pierre. *The State Nobility*. Stanford University Press. California 1989, 3.

¹⁷⁹ Tilly 2001, 403.

¹⁸⁰ Hobsbawm 1992, 177-192.

5. Roots of the Philosophy of Transitology

Following the outlining of the form of transitology as a cultural field and the form's relations to the historical social space of post-socialist countries in general, observations are made of the form of relations the cultural field has to social sciences and to the philosophy of social sciences. The observations rely heavily on philosophy of utopias as it is at the heart of the dialectical differences seen between the Marxist and positivist traditions within social sciences. This is followed by a short narrative on longer term developments that affected the philosophical outcome.

What is the connection we are creating here? As George Kateb writes of utopia and its enemies, we need to realize both that means may defeat ends and, in reference to the Third Way, that there exist a gap between a humane welfare state and a society in which modern utopianism is attained. He continues to assert that in "a period of transition" control over society is in the hands of those who made the revolution.¹⁸¹ Who held transitional control? What is the connection between transitology and the renunciation of utopian thought?

According to Kari Palonen the political problems of the *topos* are in general connected to a search for the possible and to a judgment between the possibilities¹⁸². This then boils down to the often time consuming process of judging the relations between possibilities. The tools, institutions and socialization for this process are contested, they precipitate the efficiency yet also utopic extent of the *topos*. In cases they may just as well define and restrict and sometimes do so to the extent that Weber saw the possibility of these instrumentalizations to form a *stahlhartes Gehäuse*, which is a historical construct rationalizing and instrumentalizing our utopic *topos*. This was also the binding force in the alliance of socialism and utopian thought. Dahrendorf calls it the notion of system creeping into socialism and with this mix socialism took ground in societies embarking late on the path of modernization¹⁸³. It served as an artificial *stahlhartes Gehäuse* easily imposable there where the professionalization and democratization of politics had not happened as it had according to Kari Palonen¹⁸⁴ in 19th century Europe. As Dahrendorf would surely agree, it was a self-imposed limitation of freedom on a

¹⁸¹ Kateb, George: *Utopia and Its Enemies*. Schocken Books, New York 1972.

¹⁸² Palonen 2006, 234-237.

¹⁸³ Dahrendorf 1990, 41-44.

¹⁸⁴ Palonen 2006, 9 and 81.

habitus of conditions of existence that was not yet penetrated by politics as an independently existing concept. Therefore the idea of utopia surfaces as an important concept when looking at the state of affairs after this system collapsed.

Returning to Palonen it is important to mention his notion of the temporal implications of the *topos* of the possible and the *topos* of the situation to be largely a matter of taste¹⁸⁵. This is where the connection of the historical habitus of a class of conditions of existence comes into play with transitology as a bourdeuinian cultural field, a distinction of taste.

5.1 Renunciation of Utopia, Dissection of Time and Space

*Reason is in its very essence contradiction [sic], opposition, negation, as long as freedom is not yet real. if the contradictory, oppositional, negative, power of Reason is broken, reality moves under its own positive law, and, unhampered by the Spirit, unfolds its repressive force.*¹⁸⁶

The past is not merely what has happened, but a very real and concrete paradox, it is future in the past¹⁸⁷. Through past we define the limits of the future¹⁸⁸. In this definition we are bound by our concepts as the means of perceiving and therefore controlling the past.

The very first economic theories applied in the creation of the transition were the neoclassical ones. Neoclassical textbook theories in their purity lack both spatial and temporal dimensions.¹⁸⁹ As the evolution of transition took hold after the ever so fitting application of non-spatial and non-temporal neoclassicism on the assumed tabula rasa of post-socialism, we find new theories of economics moving to stake their ground. These theories introduce in varying ways spatial and temporal qualities¹⁹⁰ and in such began the dissection of transition societies on a theoretical level.

¹⁸⁵ Palonen 2006, 236.

¹⁸⁶ Lichtheim, George: *The Concept of ideology and Other Essays*. Vintage Books. New York 1967. Lichtheim quotes here Durkheim's Reason and Revolution's second edition.

¹⁸⁷ Bloch, Ernst: *Utopia, luonto, uskonto: johdatusta Ernst Blochin ajatteluun*. Eds. Rahkonen, Keijo – Sironen, Esa. Kansan Sivistystyön Liitto, Helsinki 1985, 22.

¹⁸⁸ Della Porta, Donatella – Diani, Mario: *Social Movements, An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing, Malden, Oxford and Carlton 2006.

¹⁸⁹ Gilpin 2001, 103.

¹⁹⁰ Gilpin 2001, 106.

The concept of transition is particularly powerful as it folds space over time. It sets spatial differences on a universal time-axis or chronology. With this I refer to the “geography of imagination” described by Doreen Massey¹⁹¹, which refers to an act of justification through manipulation of the relation of time and space. It is applied as a method of social control through the separation of the past and present¹⁹². In the case of transition, it is the division of time to create the space of the transition societies. By this distinction it is made possible to separately dissect the time before transition, derive from it a status, a beginning, after which the manipulation of space may be taken under observation. The effect has then also been continued or looped through a new derivation of time after this zero state, through an observation of space and form created upon the zero-state. With the latter I refer to the forming of transitology after transition itself.

As Massey points out, such is the geography of power and knowledge. And in such, it ignores structural imbalances and the very cleavages upon which it itself rests¹⁹³. Therefore, in order to outline the form and formation of transitology in one sense, the application of world-systems analysis may prove helpful as it attempts to bridge differentiating histories in relation to each other through spatial structures. Not by universal structures set in space but by structures of social space itself.

For transition the nature of utopia is vehemently important. Imagination and images create something that is described and set forth, something more than an intention, something perceived and that something is the *utopic topos* of human beings¹⁹⁴. And, as Bloch puts it, the problem here lies in the relation of our *utopic topos* and the real existing circumstances. Transition distorts this relation by linearly slicing time and implementing spatial perception, policies, aimed at achievements already attained at another time:

*In a closed and complete[d] world every utopia is homeless.*¹⁹⁵

Therefore, a direct consequence of such action is the irrationality of policy in relation to the rationalizations of individuals, or vice versa depending on the view point, and displayed most clearly in the beginning of the undertaken transition policies. The idea of

¹⁹¹Massey 2008, 104-126.

¹⁹² Best 1995, preface XIII.

¹⁹³Massey 2008, 122.

¹⁹⁴Bloch. 1985, 26.

¹⁹⁵Bloch Bloch. 1985, 26. Brackets by writer. Translated from the Finnish by the writer.

a future that has not happened is in itself possible only in an open and unfinished world that has a horizon exceeding itself¹⁹⁶. Transition implicates a closed process of transformation to an already known form where all conflicts derive merely from the implementation of the transformation and not of the rationalization of forms of action fulfilling utopia. Someone might point out that democracy and capitalism are utopian goals themselves. In fact they are forms of action with the perceived utopian goals of material or social welfare or freedom and as such not applicable utopian goals to stimulate and formulate rationalizations of action.

Whether the results achieved through such policies are good or bad, desired or undesired, is not my line of argument. Policies under transition as described from this perspective enable conceptual competition and the creation of conflicts without subjugating the oppositional positions themselves to change. Theoretical positions not aimed at rationalizations of action fulfilling utopia are not subject to rationalization themselves as they themselves, forgive the tautology, strive to rationalize action: An essential part of actual, true future, the actual what-is-to-come, is the new, the undiscovered¹⁹⁷.

Transition as a concept seems from this point of view to create a situation in which an ideographically perceived phenomenon is attempted to police nomothetically. Such a condition was achieved on the theoretical level as described earlier in this chapter and on the policy level in wake of the authority vacuum following the Fall. The myths of democracy and capitalism were mobilized to depoliticize the existential response that followed¹⁹⁸. As such this would not have withstood but required both the rhetoric and social science of transition to constrain legitimization of the right to define myths. This was demonstrated very visibly already at start through the rejection of the Third Way model¹⁹⁹ from all directions of the competing positions²⁰⁰. Even though any Third Way model might not confer with socialist utopias²⁰¹, it serves to highlight the polarized state from which utopian intention vanished with the delegitimization of the antihegemonic other.

¹⁹⁶Bloch. 1985, 27.

¹⁹⁷Bloch. 1985, 28.

¹⁹⁸Wöll, A. – Wydra, H.: *Democracy and Myth in Russia and Eastern Europe*. Routledge, New York 2008, Introduction.

¹⁹⁹A type of social democracy in which “the best” aspects of socialism would have been retained and joined with selected practices of market liberalism.

²⁰⁰Dahrendorf 1990 and Sachs 1990.

²⁰¹Panitch – Gindin 2001, 178.

A social rubric lacking utopian intention is arguably incapable of autonomous and inherent social transformation²⁰² and rather tearing itself apart in the face of any discursive claims on the possibilities and horizon of social action. Similarly to the manner in which any ecosystem will fall upon a chain reaction of breaking linkages and niches when change is introduced only from the outside rather than through expansion and complexification. When such a development occurs - as with the famous case of rabbits brought to the Australian continent - either a partial collapse or continued and expanded normative and discursive policing of the system are the likely scenarios. The latter more often than not is prone to lead to panopticism²⁰³ as means of increased predictability as the contagion spreads.

*One of the key strategies of social control is to divorce the present from the past and to display it as timeless and eternal.*²⁰⁴

5.2 A Road Paved for Transition

How then such a seemingly violent hijacking of political will and societal horizons was possible? Roots of the conceptualization of transition need to be drawn at least to the *world revolution*²⁰⁵ of 1968. 1968 was a revolution against the corruption and connivance of the Old Left. Behind the Iron Curtain these antisystemic movements were forcefully repressed. An act which then allowed Brezhnev's rise to power by conforming the autonomic authority and power of regional party functionaries and nomenclature in exchange for them restraining and dampening any antisystemic movements²⁰⁶, whereas in Western Europe such cleavages were dealt with major restructurings²⁰⁷.

*The business of 1968 thus remained unfinished. It had to be completed, and so it would be in 1989.*²⁰⁸

The process is closely linked to what Alain Touraine has describes as the superseding of work by knowledge formation²⁰⁹. Recognition of this failed to actualize itself in the

²⁰²Panitch and Gindin 2001, 177 and Della Porta - Diani 2006.

²⁰³For panopticism see Gill 2003.

²⁰⁴Best 1995, preface XIII.

²⁰⁵Arrighi – Hopkins – Wallerstein, 2001.

²⁰⁶Derluigian 2005.

²⁰⁷Arrighi - Hopkins – Wallerstein. 2001, 37-38.

²⁰⁸Arrighi - Hopkins – Wallerstein. 2001, 38.

soviet states as it did in Western Europe with the restructurings mentioned by Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein. Only partly may we notice these restructurings in Czechoslovakia and Poland²¹⁰. The political power and significance of work and the workplace as the action rationalizing the means to achieve utopias, as the tool of the human *utopic topos*, faded. A concrete example of this is the old story of the backward state of information technology in the soviet states, which actually was not the case. The technology was readily available and in use in high research and science facilities. But unlike the part played by machinery during the modernizations of the 30s and 50s, the usage of technology as a politically transformative tool had no function in socialist states and therefore held no potential. At the same time the creation of a new class of information workers in core capitalist countries in the wake of the restructurings was ongoing and most speedy in France²¹¹. There, for example, the Minitel service launched in 1982 quickly gained providence, as the stage was already set. Indeed the restructurings in the West were mistaken by Brezhnev as an apparent weakness and thus gave no impetus for modifying their strategy²¹². And coming to the 80s it backlashed.

The absence of politically transformative work then proved most crucial once Gorbachev began his reforms. It was the cultural intelligentsia suppressed after 1968 that more often than not then seized the day²¹³. Transformative action expands the scope of possible action²¹⁴, or as Bloch put it, exceeds the horizon. By doing this it does not restrain historicity into such social relations which on the contrast conformative action requires for its legitimization. Therefore the scientific playground was set for transition to emerge as an uncontested concept for policy formulations. A radical rejection of all antisystemic ideologies in favor of the least plausible of prosystemic ideologies followed, a monetarist economization followed²¹⁵.

In relation to social sciences specifically, it was stated as one of the results of a 1994 Berlin Conference on Social Sciences in Transition that the state of social sciences in Eastern Europe corresponded then to that of the West in the '60s. This situation in the

²⁰⁹Touraine 1981, 13-17.

²¹⁰Arrighi - Hopkins – Wallerstein. 2001, 38-42.

²¹¹Arrighi - Hopkins – Wallerstein. 2001, 38-42.

²¹²Arrighi - Hopkins – Wallerstein. 2001, 42.

²¹³Derluguian 2005.

²¹⁴Gill 2003.

²¹⁵Arrighi - Hopkins – Wallerstein. 2001, 43.

West led to an institutionalization and standardization of if information, methods and data.²¹⁶

Thus coming to the mid and late 90s “transition” found itself in a situation described well in 1994 by the Polish professor Edmund Mokrzycki: “The ideological landscape is not only changing rapidly; it seems to have lost all recognizable landmarks.”²¹⁷

Only a society historicized prevalently enough is able to define its own normative guidelines in contrast to having them passed down by any entity transcending the society²¹⁸. Thus, we see the importance of discontinuation of time by transition to inflict its own normative call for action upon means. The sadness lies in the relation of society and policy. Utopian thought is essential in bringing forth social and cultural transformation²¹⁹. With discursive state action such possibility was deprived in an analogous manner to that of 1917. Therefore, when the state moved from the predominance of the state and of social evolution to that of social forces and national problems²²⁰, the reactionary habitus of the evolutionist, functionalist soviet citizen had but slight remedies against the discursive nomotheticity of transition.

5.3 Dialectical Roots of Transition

In 1863 Nikolay Chernyshevsky published his novel *What Is to Be Done?* having completed it imprisoned at the fortress of St. Peter and Paul. In his novel Chernyshevsky envisions the new man, a rational yet egoistic being. The book accidentally passed censorship and was published the same year.²²¹ Besides greatly influencing Lenin, who named his famous pamphlet after the novel, it most importantly empowered educated young Russians and gave fuel for the creation of a new social class, whose habitus was geared towards a new type of cultural competition, never to be institutionalized.

²¹⁶ Best, Heinrich – Becker, Ulrike – Marks, Arnaud ed. *Social Sciences in Transition. Social Science Information Needs and Provision in a Changing Europe*. Informationszentrum Sozialwissenschaften, Bonn 1996, 17-19.

²¹⁷ Mokrzycki Edmund: *Revenge of the Utopia* in Kennedy Michael D ed.: *Envisioning Eastern Europe*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 1994.

²¹⁸ Touraine 1981, 13-17.

²¹⁹ Touraine 1981, 18-20.

²²⁰ Touraine 1981, 119.

²²¹ Chernyshevsky, Nikolay: *Mitä on tehtävä?* Progress, Moscow 1982.

In his pamphlet Lenin denies the possibility of any alternate interpretations of socialism and most specifically any Third Way possibility or ideology:

*For mankind has not developed any “third” ideology, and in a society torn by class conflict no ideology transcending the classes can exist.*²²²

Though crediting instinctual action with offering us beginnings, Lenin accuses it and the instinctual formation of the proletariat of inefficacy and goes on demanding disciplined, pure and scientifically organized revolutionary action, policed from above.

My analogy here is between the young cultural intelligentsia that came to being during the Khrushchev era and was repressed then again during Brezhnev in favor of the entrenched functionaries. The castless intelligentsia denied of its habitus until Gorbachev, but then again marginalized in the wake of monetarization and liberalization. The vested interests of the nomenclature, solidified in developmental states by the structural ability of bureaucracy to subvert central command²²³, are contradictory to any restructurings where a meritocratic understanding between state power, cultural contest and household survival would come together. In such a situation the refusal of any Third Way, may indeed appear rational, as alternative forms of legitimization and survival strategies would easily subdue consensus, as demonstrated in Derluguian’s world-systems biography by the actions of Musa Shanibov, a freedom fighter changing his ideology from universal humanism to religious nationalism²²⁴.

In 1990 most prominently Jeffrey Sachs in his article *What Is to Be Done?* proclaimed that *the eastern countries must reject any lingering ideas about a “third way”*. He argues that reforms are a seamless web, only applicable as a whole²²⁵. The slightly naïve analogy to Lenin’s insistence on pure socialism comes to mind inevitably. Thus we notice an inability of middle class meritocratic, might I even propose nationalist, cadres to anchor themselves to power by overcoming structural cleavages and rather observe the victory of “world-systemic arbitrageurs”.

²²²Lenin, V.I.: *Mitä on tehtävä?* Karjalais-Suomalaisen SNT:n valtion kustannusliike, Petrozavodsk. 1946, 40. Translated from the Finnish by the writer.

²²³Derluguian 2005, 299-301.

²²⁴Derluguian 2005.

²²⁵Sachs 1990.

5.4 Legacy of Social Science Socialism

Most legitimate cultural goods are consumed on a seller's market²²⁶. Such was the market after the delegitimization of accepted soviet nomenklatura controlled culture. In this regard it is no wonder, that it was the voices of educated, yet oppressed soviet citizens that were heard. And that such a form of transitology uncontested took root.

Following Bourdieu in constructing the objective class upon which transition was destined, we ask ourselves what might have been the properties embodied as their class habitus?²²⁷ The simple answer would appear to be the search for a narrative. But this seems too hindsighted. They have a narrative to share. The true denominators of a class habitus - I prefer to refer to a class of conditions of existence rather than one of agents - are the hidden subsidiary characteristics. These secondary properties, such as sex or ethnicity, are according to Bordieu always present as principles of selection or exclusion²²⁸. The more dispersed the modal trajectories of a class are the less are practices reducible to the effect of synchronically defined position. This is interesting in respect to the dispersed nature of subsidiary properties of class habitus in the post-socialist states. Therefore it would seem surprising if a concerted class habitus would rise from the post-socialist space and even more so if we are to add the factor of discursive capitalist agency and structures. The construction of institutionalized habitus towards vertical societal action would then seem much more unlikely than a stronger marginalization and reconfiguration of horizontal networks.

According to Bourdieu there exists a strong correlation between social positions and the dispositions of the agents who occupy them. When faced with social decline a reconversion of strategies is required to escape the collective decline of the class. Failing in such a reconversion inclines towards divergent stances in, say, religion or politics. Such an effect blurs the relationship between social class and religious or political opinions.²²⁹ This leaves further space for any superimposed rationalizations. The nature and form of socialist social science had a historical impact in constituting this cleavage.

²²⁶Bourdieu 1994, 99.

²²⁷Bourdieu 1994, 101.

²²⁸Bourdieu 1994, 102.

²²⁹Bourdieu 1994, 110-111.

Claiming that transitology fairly uncontested occupied the cultural field of social science and policy formulation in the post-socialist space we must outline the legacy that socialist social science had inserted upon it. I do not examine cultural legitimization, but look at the strict process of scientific labour. Keeping in mind we consider academic work a social process influenced by the instruments the academic labourer utilizes.

This process then constituted a particular habitus towards reproduction of academic work. Both Dahrendorf and Durkheim define socialism a system of thought²³⁰, which through time emphasizes dispositional action in a social process. This relation was no doubt distorted through the decades of real socialism.

Socialism is future oriented. In Durkheim's words "a plan for the reconstruction of present-day societies". As such it is more so a representation of the social state of its time than a science, a social fact and an expression of new social dispositions.²³¹ The canvas upon which social inquiry was painted had scant importance in relation to the readied painting. This instigated a connection between the culture field and policy formation as it could serve as means to achieve perceived goals rather than the end result of addressable processes. Because of the nature of the post-modern challenge it becomes implicit to claim, that this state was continued as a constitutive factor maintaining the system of thought itself and thus became entrenched as a mode of conditioning, as a disposition in itself.

²³⁰ Dahrendorf 1990, 37-71, Giddens, Anthony: *Durkheim on Politics & the State*. Polity Press, Cambridge 1986, 97-120.

²³¹ Giddens 1986, 97-109.

6. Synthesis: The Conjecture of Transitology

Transitology is not an ideal or objective tool for analyzing post-socialist change, but rather born out of it. It is naturally subject to scientific objectifications itself, guided and molded by its own path-dependencies. A scientific field is constituted by its historical and social conditions of production²³² and the history of transitology is very rapid and exponential and at the same the social conditioning of production within transitology has come to pass in a very laissez-faire manner, conditioned mainly from outside the scientific field in promotion of each particular established faculty of social science and not conditioned at all bottom-up by its subject matter, nor contested by an antisystemic approach stemming from the transitional societies themselves.

The ideologically and antisystemically implosive nature of the fall of communism in Eurasia created a certain cultural space, which was and is defined by structurally and historically dialectical roots on the other hand and the contingent situation between the processes within social sciences and the political space of the post-socialist countries on the other.

This originally stimulated the constitution of transitology, stemming from earlier studies on democratic transitions, with certain features: Normativeness towards policy measures, nomotheticity and reliance on simple universalistic causal links, a fast inner flux of entrenchments and positions and yet an uncontested outer sphere

*To foist positivist models onto the study of human beings and to search for the invariable laws governing human behavior and social change is to distort the dynamic, contingent, mutable, and indeterminate character of social action.*²³³

In our terms of a system transitology first proceeded as a chain reaction instigated by multiple changes on multiple levels. The ‘outburst’ then began to bifurcate; it dispersed as it clashed with the political and societal post-socialist space. The synthesis of this clash is our main argument and conclusion. The clash entrenched and to an extent widened the cleavage that is the incommensurability of post-socialist space and transitological social scientific thought. Transitology consolidated itself upon or around this cleavage.

²³²Bourdieu 2004, 84.

²³³ Best 1995, preface XIV.

6.1 Out of Systemic Thought

Our largest hurdle to conclude anything of the nature and evolution of transitology as we have now excavated it lies in the very same history from where the defining characteristics of transitology stem from. These knowledge structures emerge from 19th and 20th century institutionalizations and instrumentalizations of social sciences. The economists formulate universalistic quantifiable equations, the political scientists meddle with simplified mid-range causalities and deductive-nomological explanations and too often the historians concentrate on long-term trends, ideas and eras or particular isolated events within them. At the same time the realities of political thought and action are torn by the legacies of the “binary lenses of modernity” as Georgi Derluguian calls them.²³⁴ Yet the tools we have to employ are constituted by the same knowledge structures.

Thus our instruments are not directly applicable to draw any direct conclusions from. Instead we should try to observe the oscillations and reactions present when we contrast these differing yet dialectical views. Doing this we are reminded by Bourdieu, that to avoid historical and social determinisms we must develop a habitus with the constitutive disposition to act, as Bourdieu says it, *a priori* on the *modus operandi*, instead of *ex post* on the *opus operatum*.²³⁵ How to understand this in terms of this study on transitology?

The general answer given to us by Wallerstein is the unthinking of the 19th century paradigm, the antinomies of structure and agency, micro and macro, nomothetic and idiographic.²³⁶

Georgi Derluguian gives us a more specific answer regarding the post-socialist space. The ambiguous state of the post-socialist cultural field should be operationalized with the concepts of social capital, habitus and trajectory. Secondly we may use Bourdieu’s concept of class to map social transformations at individual and aggregate level. This includes new trajectories of different classes under social transformations, new expression of legitimizing cultural hierarchies and capital in the reformed social space and the new elements of political mobilizations. In the following chapter 6.2 I will give my conclusion of the interaction of these elements.

²³⁴ Derluguian 2005, 287-290.

²³⁵ Bourdieu 2004, 89.

²³⁶ Wallerstein 1991.

What do these three notions mean to the researcher? We must acknowledge the social act in the social process of knowledge formation. Secondly, we must not simply acknowledge but escape notions of functionality or applicability of our own work, or we inevitably join a system of thought so loathed by Dahrendorf.

In light of these observations we may conclude of transitology that first of all, its uniqueness lies not in the novelty of the fall of communism or in its goal- and policy-oriented normativeness, but in its specific dislodgment from the prevalent wider systems of thought, emulating an inner contradictory logic. The instruments and institutions of panopticism and discursiveness, of evaluating between possibilities were unaccountable and unsanctioned. The result was an exaggerated reaction: Deducing from the prevalent market orthodoxy an over appreciation of bureaucratic - policy relevant – knowledge followed²³⁷. Yet, when observing the history of social sciences Peter Wagner reminds us that one aspect of the widely extended modern institutions is trust, but its flipside is dependence and disciplination, thus the spread of abstract systems of thought is by necessity an immense collectivization process, where people had to learn to behave predictably, as orderly organized masses before the benefits of social planning could be reaped²³⁸. In itself this process is enabling but only so under the strict precondition of following disciplined lines of behavior, as we discussed in chapter 4.3 to be the state of discord between the historical habitus of the class of conditions of existence in the post-socialist Eurasia in relation to policy and theory. Importantly, when looking at this process in relation to the history of transitology we must remember to connect to it the roots of '89/'91 as a continuation of '68. Connect it to the failure of the brezhnevites to incorporate antisystemic forces into the political apparatus. This cleavage then aggravated with transitology as the catalyst.

*...the only truth is that truth is a stake in struggles as much within the scientific world (the sociological field) as in the social world that this scientific world takes as its object...*²³⁹

²³⁷ Derluignan 2005, 310-311.

²³⁸ Wagner 2001a, 83.

²³⁹ Bourdieu 2004, 115.

6.2 Oedipal Transitology

Whenever objective structures encounter mental structures that are in line with them they produce complicity where the imminent tendencies of the established order continuously appear as expected. Similarly Marx described the dominant dominated by their domination. Agents in the university world more often than not conform to this analysis.²⁴⁰

The weight load of the type of social scientific thought transitology introduced was not simply too heavy, so that under the conditions of a dismantled cultural field a reformation of dispositions had no structural starting point to relate to, but indeed it was also too weak; too weak in relation to the whole of social scientific competition and legitimating structures. It is an Oedipus syndrome in the sense that transitology failed to recognize its own constituting cleavages and antinomies, its own history, but yet remained blindly devoted to those aspects of its past that most predominantly gave birth to it and used them in order to establish its own standing, to entrench itself in a similar manner as for example Joseph Stiglitz and the polish Trio did.

On the levels of policy and the political *topos*, as the fall of the socialist system in '89/'91 was a continuation of 1968, it was a continuation of an antisystemic movement and instead of incorporating any of this cleavage into existing forms of knowledge formation, the cleavage itself has been consolidated and entrenched in the wake of transitology as well as in the wake of the weakness of transitology to separate from its origins.

In this light it is unsurprising to stumble upon so many political transitologists meddling with various theories of elite bargaining, rent-seeking, state-capture and cronyism. It would do good to review these theories in light of capitalist competition in the historical world-system in relation to class distinction in the post-socialist space and its state of discord with the introduced cultural field. Why so? In this situation we end up with inflation of any cultural capital, thus delegitimizing also social, cultural and even economic capital acquired historically from the space of the represented class of conditions of existence (in the post-socialist space). This devaluates any predictability of the historical habitus and nullifies any efforts to construct an indigenous system for evaluating possibilities of the utopian *topos*, a system for inclusive concerted action. We

²⁴⁰ Bourdieu 1989, 4.

are then left only and simply with the discursiveness and disciplinary demands of the implemented system of thought, of the foreign unconnected *stahlhartes Gehäuse*.

On the level of politics we then lack any constrained professionalization which Kari Palonen refers to have happened in 19th and 20th century Europe. Remember, the temporal extend of the *topos* of the possible is defined by distinction in the *topos* of the situation²⁴¹. How is this relation then to function in instrumentalizing and rationalizing the *topos* of the possible by the policy makers and candidates for professionalized-politicians-to-be when we remember how the oedipal cultural field of transitology prides and lives off of its dissections of space and time, as discussed in chapter 5.1? These tautologies are the core of the dependent relation between the historically established, rationalized and institutionalized social sciences and the semi-peripheral manifestations of the post-socialist space. The tautologies reproduce the cleavages of western social sciences in the post-socialist space, not to mitigate the atomization of the cultural field but to prevent it. In the post-socialist space those cleavages are not the ones around which the relation of the political *topos* and the social scientific cultural field would have historically grown.

*New groupings with their aspirations for monopoly on ideas and institutions took the lead.*²⁴²

6.3 What Is to Be Done?

How to rekindle the imagination of the historical habitués of post-socialist space and the oedipally dysfunctional cultural field? Let me lastly wonder off of theoretical synthesis and from my point of view weigh what might we learn from my research construct. Aware of what we have concluded how should we now approach the post-socialist condition?

The answers provided to us by authors like Meghnad Desai and Peter Wagner follow an apologetic and nostalgic argument. They begin from the fact that society still exists, therefore why not a new system of antisystemic thought would rise from the ashes of

²⁴¹ Palonen 2006, 236.

²⁴² Genov, Nikolai: *Transformation Risks: Structure and Dynamics* in Best, Heinrich – Becker, Ulrike – Marks, Arnaud ed. *Social Sciences in Transition. Social Science Information Needs and Provision in a Changing Europe*. Informationszentrum Sozialwissenschaften, Bonn 1996, 39.

the socialist Phoenix. Thus, Wagner, states that there is no reason to assume that collective guidance would not still be needed, unless we wish to return to the idea that the interaction of a multitude of individuals would automatically provide positive collective results²⁴³. Meghnad Desai has fate that utopian thought will once again manifest itself, but on a larger, perhaps global scale.

Ralf Dahrendorf described in 1990 the road to freedom to consist of three processes. The constitutional aspect must demonopolize political power, a regulatory market economy must aim for free markets yet constrained through politics based on some doctrines of thought producing competing cultural distinctions. Thirdly and most importantly for Dahrendorf comes the civil society to pull the divergent time scales of politic and economic reform together, “the hour of the citizen”. Civil society must have substantial variety and power outside of the state.²⁴⁴ These three aspects Dahrendorf argues must work and emerge together and with time in Eastern Europe, for a free society to emerge. He feels the prospects are gloomy.

Wallerstein has long insisted that the ever entrenching and widening cleavages of the inner logic of the capitalist world-economy will not seize until the bifurcation of the system brings itself down, what is to follow he does not know. In this sense we have not much left to do expect to wait, survive and perhaps further this development, so that at that moment one desiring to do so could seize the day.

Not wandering off too far to predictions of the collapse of capitalism or the slow evolutionary creation of a free society, what is to be done? I was recently on an OSCE election observation assignment in Kyrgyzstan. With the guidance of yes-or-no questions provided to me I was to help the organization determine the level of democracy of the elections. My interpreter was a 29-year-old Kyrgyz man and a father of one called Kamal. He held a PhD in economics with an immense knowledge of transition economics and taught at local universities when not moonlighting as an interpreter. Driving by a picturesque mountain river Kamal lamented of the condition of a hot springs facility we saw. Before it was visited by the likes of Yuri Gagarin, he told me. It is in ruins now because the Kyrgyz have been unable to attract foreign direct investment, he continued. Kamal outranked me in education, life’s experience and the number of languages spoken. Yet, I enjoyed respect from his part, not simply because I

²⁴³ Wagner 2001a, 87.

²⁴⁴ Dahrendorf 1990, 71-108.

was his employer for the time being, but because he knew that I hold future prospects outranking his by far, if not in quality then in quantity. The post-socialist space is lodged as described in this paper. Its defining character has become the constituting cleavage of its functioning. Even though the notion of a self-constituting system always offers the possibility for change, in this contingency, which has become a structural cleavage of the wider system, any rapid change stemming from local (re-)politicization and instrumental rationalization appears unlikely.

Nothing is really to be done in that regard. In the words of a teacher of mine, professor of East European sociology at Freie Universität Berlin, Nikolai Genov:

*Thus the Eastern Europeans are confronted with a rather complex problem situation in which the steps in the direction of social rationalization meet various modifications of irrationality.*²⁴⁵

²⁴⁵ Genov 1996, 39.

7. Concluding Remarks

The multiple tautologies of transitology reproduce themselves in connection with differing dissections of time and space. The tautologies may be divided tentatively to three groupings which intertwine in various ways on various levels:

- 1) The nomothetic tautologies dismaying continuities and historical structures
- 2) The realist and evolutionist tautologies dismaying spatial dimensions and the character of a global undividable unit of analysis
- 3) The unobjectivated research indifferent of the aforementioned spatial or temporal character of their own research setting, its concepts, history and relation to the subject.

In 1994 a conference in Berlin on the changing state of social sciences amidst the transition in Europe was held. Eastern European participants of the conference showed reluctance to an unquestioned application of Western theories and methods. Such basic concepts as political ‘left’ and political ‘right’ bore differing meanings in different regions.

A commercialization of research in the wake of ‘89 was mentioned as one of the reasons driving research isolation and lack of overview in the post-socialist space. Data was at the time often passed only to the West.²⁴⁶ It is clear that such actions served only purposes of scientific competition within the established western community. Organizers of the conference Heinrich Best and Ulrike Becker write in the concluding volume that “The Conference has shown that the Eastern European infrastructure is unable to counteract this research-inhibiting process”. They continue to state that competition on the scientific arena of Eastern European social scientists is made impossible due to a scarcity of information flow.²⁴⁷

Such developments stemming from the situation described in this thesis left the post-socialist cultural field of social sciences vulnerable to exploitation and predatory attacks. It resulted in a forceful adaptation of established perspectives supported by strong financing and institutions. Ironically the fate of the Eastern European social scientist followed the same pattern as that of the collective worker described by Allina-

²⁴⁶ Best – Becker– Marks 1996, 17-18.

²⁴⁷ Best – Becker– Marks 1996, 18.

Pissano. An embarkation on competitive dispositions imitating western habitus was coupled with a choice to quietly marginalize.

This meant in any case competition against other local actors for foreign or international gains. Therefore the means did not and do not legitimize the ends. This effectively leads to a situation in which this delegitimate competition is upheld by its very existence. The reward is a raise to peerage, the ennobling of the social scientist after which he no longer needs to compete with his local peers, with the other roundheads, in a delegitimate situation and may join the academic jet set surfing the western establishments of Berlin, Florence, London and the States. This process is even facilitates through multiple outposts established after the Fall by such financiers as the George Soros Foundation. They provide extraction pipelines for brain-drain, namely the many new universities of the post-socialist space boasting the title “American” or “European”.

*The internationalization of social science research is only at its beginning.*²⁴⁸

²⁴⁸ Best – Becker– Marks 1996, 17.

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